

ML 9020.9

inCite

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NEWSLETTER OF THE AUSTRALIAN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION ASSOCIATION

Multicultural library services



Commonwealth assistance to multicultural library services: progress in 1989

The main development in multicultural library services during 1989 was the announcement by the Commonwealth Government in July 1989 of the National Agenda for Multicultural Australia.

There had been a wide range of library inputs to the National Agenda: ALIA made a submission in late 1988; the New Responsibilities conference in November 1988 provided combined museums-libraries-archives input; the conclusions of the Australian Libraries Summit were conveyed to the Com-

monwealth Government; and there were personal contacts with officers of the Office of Multicultural Affairs, including the Director, Peter Shergold.

The National Agenda included two initiatives relating to libraries. The first deals with the coordination of efforts by 'cultural heritage institutions, including libraries' to 'reflect the cultural diversity of the Australian heritage in their collections and practices'. A consultative committee is to meet early in December, and produce its conclusions by mid-1990. Libraries are represented by the chairman of the State Librarians'

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Australia's statistical history on microfiche



1 Australian Statistician, Ian Castles, presents the National Library Director General, Warren Horton, with the 'Colonial Microfiche Series.'

A record of Australia in statistics — from the first European settlement at Sydney Cove in 1788 to Federation in 1901 — was presented to the National Library of Australia on 12 October 1989.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has microfiched and catalogued almost all of the known official statistical records produced by the six State and colonial agencies. These represent more than 250 000 pages on 3000 fiche. The project — which has taken 10 years to complete — will make this enormous body of statistical source material more readily accessible to scholars.

In presenting the 'Colonial Microfiche Series' to the Director-General of the National Library, Warren Horton,

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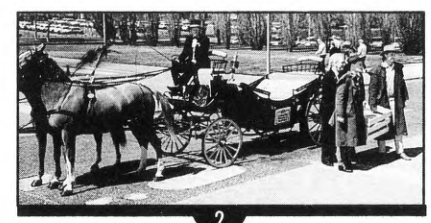
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Australian statistician, Ian Castles, said the project was a valuable contribution to recording and preserving Australia's history and heritage.

The series will become available in major interstate, university and overseas libraries, providing access to large numbers of researchers and the public.

2 Australia's statistical history arrives at the National Library.



The count is done!

Vice-President 1990 and President-Elect 1991 is John Levett. The members elected to the Board of Education by the membership at large are Jean Bailey, Fisher Library, University of Sydney, and Vicki Williamson, Curtin University of Technology, WA. The General Council's nominee to the Board is Joyce Kirk, Kuringgai CAE. Their terms of office begin 1 January.

3 John Levett



Council and by the National Library; Morag Loh, a consultant to the State Library of Victoria, is also a member.

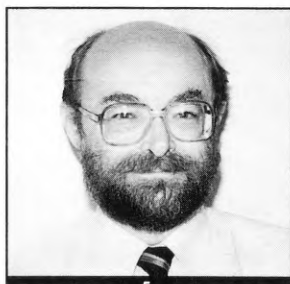
The second initiative was a grant of \$25 000 to the National Library to 'fund a survey of library collections in languages other than English with a view to incorporating the resulting information in the National Bibliographic Network'. The National Library is working on this initiative, which has the potential to reduce the cost of cataloguing non-English language materials.

There have also been some developments arising from the Commonwealth Government's National Policy on Languages, adopted in 1987. The Australian Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education (AACLAME) was created as part of the policy, and has strongly supported funding for multicultural library services. AACLAME has recently established a Language Services Reference Group to deal with a range of issues, including libraries. Its first meeting was on 17 November.

Four library agencies have received grants under AACLAME's Multicultural and Cross-Cultural Supplementation Program (MACCSP). These grants are to investigate multicultural training and curriculum needs in library education. Grants have been awarded to Northcote City Library, Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education, Queensland University of Technology and Canberra College of Advanced Education.

In 1987 and 1988, ALIA's campaign for Commonwealth assistance to multicultural library services came close to achieving its major goals. Although this now seems less likely, it does have a number of achievements to its credit. More generally, libraries have made their presence felt in this area. They must now be seriously considered in any major government initiative in the field of multiculturalism, and have a much higher profile in this area than they have ever had before.

Derek Whitehead



5 Derek Whitehead



gies to achieve those goals. Because of the unexpectedly early move to Canberra this year, the scheduled strategic planning exercise was deferred until 1990.

It is important that ALIA undertake as a matter of urgency an exercise to determine priorities for future action if the gains the Association has made to date and the new building and the new location are to be capitalised on. Planned growth is to be preferred to *ad hoc* growth and is the best way that this Association can be assured of a productive, useful and relevant future.

During the year I have had the opportunity of meeting and talking with members and corresponding and talking on the telephone with them. This has made me aware of the diverse yet close-knit community throughout Australia which makes up this Association and which provides its strength. In a period full of challenges it has been

frustrating that so often I have had to defer a personally preferred program of work because of overriding priorities; yet in retrospect I marvel that the four major planks in the platform on which I stood have been in some part achieved — greater support for teacher-librarians both inside and outside the Association; the adoption of a formal international relations policy; a successful move to Canberra; and an increasing awareness that librarians need to become more assertive in presenting themselves as innovators and as managers, together with a recognition of the importance of lobbying at all levels. These planks need to be nailed more securely to the floor and that is my task for next year.

I extend my thanks to all members of ALIA and to the staff for their support during the year. It has made my task of leadership of the Association so much easier. To Lynn Allen, the incoming President, as she picks up the banner on 1 January 1990, good luck and best wishes.

Demystifying language

Integrating non-English language sources into the library and information studies curriculum

The Centre for Library and Information Studies (CLIS) of the Canberra College of Advanced Education (CCA) has recently been awarded a research grant by the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training, under its multicultural program. CLIS will offer twelve introductory lectures and tutorials to its librarianship students, who are non-linguists, as an experiment. The aim is to give the students a basic understanding of the structure, similarities and differences of the principal European and Asian languages.

The experimental lectures will aim to 'demystify' foreign languages, giving students more confidence in working with them, and providing information and encouragement for them to take up language studies as part of their librarianship course or as an extracurricular interest. A trial lecture to library undergraduates earlier this year was evaluated most enthusiastically by the students.

The lectures will be given as part of the unit Information Sources in the

Bachelor of Arts in Library and Information Studies at the CCAE during Semester 1, 1990. They will be critically assessed to see how well they have achieved their aims, and how the students have benefited from them.

The results of the project will be reported to the library profession with a view to integrating language awareness more widely into the library studies curriculum across Australia. Progress statements will also be published from time to time, inviting comment.

The project is being developed under the supervision of Associate Professor Nancy Lane, Head of the CLIS, School of Communication, CCAE. Peter Judge, Honorary Research Associate, CLIS, is the project manager. An Advisory Committee has been set up consisting of Associate Professor Michael Sawyer (Head, Centre for Modern Languages, School of Communication, CCAE), David Barron (ACT Librarian), Peter Haddad (Chief Librarian, Control Sub-Section, General Collections and Services Branch, NLA), Mechthild Guha (ANU Library) and Anna Booth (ACT Institute of TAFE).

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