FRONT LINE

It has been quite a year, has 1989. This time last year we were still in Sydney in our own building, with established, stable staff and no decision to move to Canberra (though it was imminent), and we were still called LAA and had a 50-year-old Royal Charter. Twelve months later we have a new name, a new charter, new objectives, have sold the Ultimo building, have moved to Canberra into new temporary premises and have engaged and trained new junior and senior staff. The Foundation Stone has been laid for the new building in Canberra by the Governor-General, with the new building to be completed by May 1990. And librarians are commonly not perceived as managers!

It has been a year of achievement — a perusal of the decisions taken at General Council meetings reveals an Association active in developing standards (schools, prisons, public libraries), establishing on a sound commercial footing the publication arm of ALIA, preparing for the next two major biennial conferences, implementing the decisions of the Australian Libraries Summit, consulting and devising means to promote libraries following the demise of the ALPC, providing industrial information to both employees and employers, being actively involved in consultations relating to the Structural Efficiency Principle, defining a new relationship between ALIA and ACLIS, expanding the Information for the Nation Campaign to promote libraries in the community, operating a full program of accreditation visits by the Board of Education, and producing twenty issues of *InCite* and four of *ALJ* as well as other serial and monograph titles.

Also should be included the joint activities with other organisations such as the National Book Council and the book trade, the highly important and widespread section and sectional group activities and those productive programs of branches and regional groups. In a year of major change and upheaval it is an impressive list.

However — before we get too carried away with our cleverness and our industry — we should pause and reconsider what we are doing and why. The Association needs to assess its current activities and determine what its goals are for the future. Where do we want to be in the year 2000? What should this Association look like? How can we ensure that what we do this next year and the ones after it will enable us to reach those goals? Out of all those activities listed above, which are the priority activities for the Association? Are there other programs we should be undertaking, and which are the ones we should be ceasing?

Any group can be busy — the clever group is the one that is busy to a plan with specific goals identified and agreed. If ALIA is to continue to prosper, it must decide now what it wants to be like in 10 years' time and start to set some short- and long-term goals and to devise strate-

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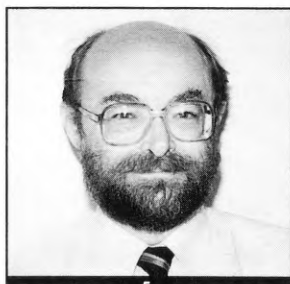Council and by the National Library; Morag Loh, a consultant to the State Library of Victoria, is also a member.

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

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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 (CCAE) 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 a 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 Sawer (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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