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provided an organised opportunity for children to learn to read and write. However, until recently, society has not known that about 15 per cent of the adult population has not gained adequate literacy skills during those childhood years.

The reasons are many and varied and include poverty, illness, isolation, sight and hearing problems, emotional disturbance and non-attendance at school. Opportunities need to be provided for those people to learn basic literacy skills as adults.

Of the estimated one million Australian adults who are functionally illiterate, only about 28 000 are currently enrolled in literacy programs. A number of adult literacy programs already operate out of libraries, providing a real connection between books and learning for the most educationally disadvantaged in our community.

However, we need more. Through the International Literacy Year (ILY) program in Australia the whole community — industry, community agencies, educational bodies — is being encouraged to take literacy development as its responsibility and put literacy permanently on the public agenda.

Australia's ILY program has concentrated on funding strategic national projects which can provide further development in the four priority areas: adult literacy, child and community literacy, international activities and public awareness. For example, major funding has been provided for the development of competence ratings scales for adult literacy, and for the development, by two State Governments, of a framework for literacy strategies for pre-schoolers through to adults.

Through two Small Grants Programs a number of libraries have received funding. Students within the Carringush Regional Library's adult literacy program will write and produce

a quality publication dealing with the central theme of International Literacy Year: their perceptions and their hopes. The Queensland State Library will conduct a Literacy Services in Libraries Seminar which will focus on the way librarians can, and have, contributed to existing literacy services and resources and the use that tutors and students have made of the library.

The Western Suburbs Regional Group of Libraries in Perth has organised a competition to produce a reader friendly brochure which will promote the library as a resource for people with literacy difficulties. The Rockhampton Library will compile and distribute a 'literacy bag' to stimulate greater public awareness of the importance of literacy and the role of the public library in literacy.

From the ILY international budget funds were provided to part-sponsor the World Conference on Education for All held in Thailand in March. As part of an Australian delegation I attended this conference in my role as Chairman of the National Consultative Council for ILY.

The Conference adopted the World Declaration on Education for All and a parallel Framework of Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs.

The Declaration identifies the 'essential learning tools' and 'basic learning content' required to ensure the development of individuals while recognising the scope of basic learning needs and how they should be met. The Framework emphasises the role that non-government agencies should be given in the planning and implementing of basic education programs.

Learning is a life long process. I know the richness books and writing can bring to our lives and I hope that many more people, as a result of ILY, will be enabled to share such joys.

Margaret Whitlam

Flood fund established

At the Queensland Branch Council Meeting on 3 May it was resolved to establish a fund to assist in re-establishment of libraries in flood-affected areas. In western Queensland libraries were badly affected. In Charleville only one of the libraries escaped — the library at the High School. The Public Library, and the libraries at the Primary School, the Pre-School, the School of Distance Education, and the Catholic School were completely wiped out. This means that not only books, but catalogs, furniture, shelving, display materials have gone. The primary school library at Alpha met the same end.

The Shire Clerk described to me the events as they affected the Public Library: 'The water came through the town at 41 km an hour. It burst through the glass doors of the library, taking them off completely, and whirled round inside. All that is left is about 100 books which were on a high shelf attached to the wall.'

With so much to replace, it is reasonable to expect that libraries will come fairly low on the list when the available funds are allocated. This is a worthy cause, and an opportunity to demonstrate that the profession is capable of putting its hand in its own pocket as well as putting its hand out!

Send donations to ALIA Queensland Branch Flood Fund, PO Box 318, Ferny Hills, Qld 4055. We are attempting to obtain tax-deductibility for this fund but at this stage there appear to be some difficulties. Branch Council is arranging a social function to launch the fund in the near future.

Jenny Cram

Convener

Queensland Branch Flood Fund

Enhanced by which bank?

Use of Compact Disc Read Only Memory (CD-ROM) databases in the Social Sciences and Humanities Library, University of NSW will shortly be enhanced by two new sets of computer equipment and compact disc drives. The cost of the equipment is being met by a \$10 000 donation from the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, UNSW branch. Manager, Ron White, presented the University Librarian, Dr Christine Henderson, with a large facsimile

cheque for that amount on 26 April.

CD-ROMs are physically identical to the CD used for music except that they store data — up to 250 000 pages of printed text — instead of music. Each Special Library has a CD-ROM service that provides fast, accurate and user-friendly access to information sources, enabling undergraduates to become familiar with modern information retrieval systems and searching techniques. Postgraduates and academ-

ics can use CD-ROM databases as a complement to online searching of remote databases.

Databases currently held by the Social Sciences and Humanities Library include Business Periodicals Index, ERIC (access to the world's literature in education and related disciplines), Humanities Index, MLA International

China Daily highlights

Griffith University is to publish a bi-monthly index highlighting the articles and issues run in the *China Daily* newspaper. The *China Daily Index* was launched on 1 May, marking the culmination of 3 years' planning and negotiation between the newspaper and the university. It is a joint project of Griffith University's library and its academic Division of Asian and International Studies and the *China Daily*.

A 3-year agreement has been struck for the University to produce the index, with a view to *China Daily* staff being trained at Griffith. The index was the brainchild of Griffith University reference services librarian Elsie Leow who identified the need from the requests of students and academics for assistance in finding articles in past editions of the *China Daily*.

Co-editor of the index, and lecturer in Chinese economics, Dr Paul Ivory said that as the only English newspaper in China, the *China Daily* was essential reading for the vast majority of people interested in the country but unable to speak Chinese. The first edition of the *China Daily Index* covers all stories published since 1 January 1990.



Griffith University Librarian Elsie Leow (left) works on the first issue as Dr Paul Ivory, Darrell Dorrington and Alla Mazuk look on.

Excerpta medica

Excerpta Medica announces the forthcoming release of six new CD-ROM products covering biomedical abstracts, citations and indexing in specialist subjects. The first three products are now available for Trial and Buy or annual subscription and will include Drugs and Pharmacology, Cardiology, and Immunology and AIDS. In July a further three products will be released — Gastroenterology, Psychiatry, and Neurosciences.

Each CD-ROM product will cover 10 years of backfile information from the Excerpta Medica database (Embase) 1980 through to the present and will be updated quarterly. Content selection is based on cover-to-cover inclusion of material from the most significant journals in the specialist field, which from 1990 also includes letters, notes, editorials etc. This core information is enhanced by comprehensive selection per subject from the entire Embase database journal collection for 3 500 journal titles.

'Beyond 2000' for ILL delivery in Darwin in the 90s?

A staff member (qualified Library Technician) at ABC TV Archives in Darwin recently applied for a position with a more conventional library.

A member of the interviewing panel rang the Director of News and put a number of 'conventional' questions to him about the applicant. The Director later admitted to the applicant that he hadn't understood most of the questions and quite honestly had no idea what the panel was talking about. But he said that he understood the inter library loan one although he didn't know why the panel seemed baffled by his answer.

He was asked if the staff member was familiar with inter library loan procedure. Sure, he said, we are always getting items from other places and sending items interstate. She is very good in this area. I have no problems with her getting items almost immediately I request them. He said the panel was impressed by this and went on to ask him whether or not she used the ALIA voucher system for inter library loans? 'No', he said, 'we don't use the voucher system, we use the Satellite system.'

Periodical centre for Qld schools

Queensland schools have found an innovative way to cope with budget restraints and the ever-increasing need for students to be able to access a wide range of current information sources through periodicals.

Centre 2000 in Ferny Hills in Brisbane has set up a facility which has been greeted with enormous enthusiasm by schools right across the State.

This centre maintains a collection of periodicals of use to high school students and teachers. It provides a photocopying service to schools of articles from these periodicals.

Most of the periodicals indexed in Guidelines are now held by the centre. The centre has subscribed to sixty of these titles since 1988. Others and back issues have been donated from school collections. Schools are regularly provided with lists of gaps the centre would like to fill.

Photocopies of articles are normally made and posted to schools on the same day as the request is received. Five days gets a return delivery in most of Queensland's provincial cities. The service is cheap and efficient and schools can benefit from advantages such as re-allocation of funds to other resources previously unaffordable; saving of shelf space for storing back issues; no space concerns about lost or misfiled back issues of periodicals.

Centre 2000 is offering a wonderful service to schools and we are grateful for the initiatives by the Department of Education and its staff which have made its existence possible.

Judy Hunter



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Biography, PAIS International, Psyclit (abstracts or summaries of the world's periodical literature in psychology and related disciplines), Social Sciences Citation Index, Social Sciences Index and the most recent addition — Sociofile.

The popularity of the databases makes it advisable to contact the relevant library for a booking. Contacts are: Physical Sciences Library: Tony Cargnelutti (ext 2680); Biomedical Library: Christine Lindsay (ext 2651); Social Sciences and Humanities Library: Richard d'Avigdor (ext 2659); Law Library: Peter Sidorko (ext 2685).

Pat Howard

University of NSW Library
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A \$10 000 large facsimile cheque is presented by Ron White to Dr Henderson (left). Looking on is Pat Howard, Development and Planning Librarian.