

Careers expo and other observations

Mike Rann in launching the South Australian 1990 Careers Expo on Thursday, 3 May 1990 stated that there is a need for 'greater cooperation between employers, youth organisations and educators in ensuring young people have comprehensive information on making decisions about future career options'.

Three days later the ALIA (SA Branch) stand had been depleted of over 2500 brochures and leaflets and it is estimated that over 1000 students and parents had been spoken to about the library and information profession plus many others who passed by, looked, were captured by the CD-ROMs and Presscom et cetera.

These interested enquirers ranged from school leavers unsure of what an information professional really did each day, to 'almost finished' graduates who thought another string to their bow might be useful, to parents who had brought their children but thought perhaps this career might be the one for their avenue back to the workforce, to the occasional student who made use of Presscom or the CD-ROM to check out information for their current assignment.

Behind these statistics however some observations can be made.

First, without the hardworking ALIA (SA) Promotion, Education and Recruitment Subcommittee (PEARS) who never flagged when their convener said 'what about ...? can you do ...? it would be a good idea if ...', the event would not have been possible.

Sponsors were sought and included the State Library, the Library Promotion Council, SACAE, SAIT and the University of Adelaide libraries who generously contributed funds which enabled the Branch to be relieved of the major funding responsibility. Display materials were begged or borrowed from public and TAFE libraries including the Hub Library, Public Libraries Branch, and the TAFE LEARN network and CD-ROMs and computers from a local supplier, BBC Micro Supplies while *The Advertiser* generously donated staff and online costs for the use of their database.

However the final appreciation should be given to the members of

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The launch

On 28 March 1990, John Turner, Member for Myall Lakes in the NSW Government, launched *Preserving our Heritage—a paper conservation video kit*, on behalf of the Minister for Arts, the Hon. Peter Collins MP. The reception, hosted by the ALIA NSW Branch and held in the Mitchell Galleries of the State Library of NSW during Sydney's 'big wet' was very successful. It was attended by over 70 people representing librarians, library technicians, archivists, historical societies, curators and records managers.

This kit, produced by ALIA, with the cooperation of the School of Librarianship at the University of NSW, and funded in part by the NSW Bicentennial Council, represents an exciting foray into practical education in the area of conservation, and for professional development generally for the Association.

The evening also saw the launching of *Managing local studies collections—selected seminar papers, sample forms and policy statements*, by the Mitchell Librarian, Margy Burn. This

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Behind the scenes: The camera man helps Judy Washington prepare for the cameras.

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National literacy conference:

first of its kind to bring together such a diversity of librarians and literacy workers

One of the most rewarding outcomes of planning and conducting a major conference is a positive response at the end of the day. This was just the response which met joint organisers, ALIA National Public Libraries Section and National Literacy Section, at the conclusion of the national conference: *Literacy and Libraries: Read All About It?* Held in Melbourne, 2-3 April 1990, the conference proved to be a landmark.

The calibre of the speakers, range of issues dealt with, and active involvement of all participants contributed to an exciting and stimulating 2 days.

'Well organised, thought provoking, awareness raising experience'; 'a good exercise on the interdependence of librarians and adult literacy tutors and how they can help each other'; 'I appreciated the chance to do some active work in the sessions'; 'good mix of speakers and topics'. This is just a small sample of the feedback participants provided as part of their evaluation.



International Literacy Year

READING 1990

In launching the conference, Margaret Whitlam, Chairman of the National Consultative Council for ILY, warmly welcomed all delegates and wished the conference a constructive outcome. Noel Simpson, Executive Director, ILY Secretariat, concluded the proceedings with comments about directions for literacy after ILY.

Two interstate speakers focused on research. Rosie Wickert presented a report on the first national survey of adult literacy, 'No single measure'. Terri Ryan outlined the current status of an adult literacy research database project. Local speakers discussed topics ranging from literacy in the workplace, literacy education in librarianship courses, literacy and ESL, and social costs of

low levels of literacy, to adult literacy, a Koori experience, and what is literacy and numeracy. Theoretical discussion of adult learning and literacy was not overlooked, and neither was findings of current research in Victoria.

On reflection, a unique aspect of the conference was the special mix of participants. Too often library conferences bring together librarians without the benefit of other practitioners in the field or related areas. Not so for this conference: over 90 people attended from many fields: literacy workers, literacy coordinators, librarianship students, educators, publishers, book suppliers, and librarians.

The interchange of views and ideas, particularly in the workshops and in the breaks for coffee and conversation, gave groups insight into each others' experiences of dealing with literacy issues. One literacy worker said she was particularly encouraged by the interest and commitment shown by librarians attending a conference in an area that is still not seen as a central role for libraries.

Participants suggested issues they wanted to see followed up in future workshops. The Literacy Section will use these suggestions in planning the next series of workshops, the first of which is scheduled for late 1990.

Victorian sponsors of the conference were: Rotary Club of Bentleigh, Baker & Taylor Books, TAFE Publications Unit, and The Bookery.

All in all, a landmark conference in this International Literacy Year. Proceedings are due to be published in a future issue of *Australasian public libraries and information services*.

Ann Le Lievre
Eve Stocker

National Literacy Section

▶ From 1 ...

ALIA (SA Branch) who so readily gave up precious time to staff the stand and take responsibility for providing the professional profile and the information.

This has been an important exercise for ALIA (SA Branch), not only as an opportunity to provide information about how to qualify as a librarian or library technician but significantly as another opportunity to publicly present the face of the Association and help increase understanding of our profession.

It was an opportunity to demonstrate that ALIA members are adaptive, flexible and essentially proactive to innovation, to demonstrate that we 'have taken our brains out of cold storage and are receptive to change' and to demonstrate that we are concerned, whatever our field of work, about the life-long education of our users through the provision of our information services and the value we add to those services. As Mike Rann also said, 'Unless we do this we will never be winners ... personally or as a state or nation'.

ALIA and its members were the winners.

Jan Heath spoke of the spirit of cooperation that is growing in South Australia in the April *InterAlia* president's column and this needs to be nurtured and encouraged to grow. Not just the cooperation between libraries, but also the continued awareness of what the professional and technician staff in each arena are actually doing and what the issues are that are currently impacting on each area.

This happened during the Careers EXPO with the members who staffed the display coming from all fields of librarianship and taking advantage of the quiet moments to find out what the latest developments in each area of the profession have been. But this was only a small step and it is only by taking this and other advantages that we will each enhance our personal skills and knowledge resulting in the way for a skilled and productive profession with all 'our energies harnessed rather than confined and limited'.

Whether the issues are reviews of libraries in Higher Education, funding for literacy programs in public libraries, standards for school libraries, award restructuring for PSA employees ... the outcomes affect us all as members of a united Association and profession. We all need to be aware of all the issues.

Di Booker
Convener, PEARS

Really Vital!

The telephone number for the ALIA National President, Lynn Allen, in *The vital link* is wrong, and should be replaced by (09) 427 3328. Please make note of this important change.