

P.D.Q.

Professional Development Questions

Much to my chagrin, I have found since my column saw light of day two issues ago, that only members like me, and our esteemed Editor, of an age described delicately in the best circles as 'uncertain', have any idea of the meaning of PDQ. At least it is listed in David Jones' *Australian dictionary of acronyms and abbreviations*. But for many dear readers, the column title is at best dully worthy, and not even factual at that. Any suggestions? Apart from kudos, the best suggestion will win a tasteful and unique commemorative token of our gratitude and esteem.

Several members have commented lately on their high expectations for the federal government's Training Guarantee Scheme. This scheme, which began operating this financial year, is designed to ensure that all employers provide 'structured training' for

their employees. Each employer must either spend 1 per cent of the payroll on training (increasing to 1.5 per cent next financial year), or contribute that amount to the government for industry-supervised training schemes.

A background survey showed that an amazingly high number of Australian employers (60 per cent) do not spend any money at all on training. In comparison, other western countries such as France, United Kingdom, West Germany and Sweden do provide significant training. Through the scheme the government hopes to increase the efficiency and competitiveness of Australian industry in the long term. Librarians should be part of the workforce to benefit from the scheme.

However, this columnist wonders whether librarians tend to be employed by firms which are already committed to training. How many ALIA members will not receive training this year worth 1 per cent of their salary? Do let me know.

Carol Kenchington
Professional Development Officer

LETTERS

Dear Editor,

Congratulations to Kay Poustie, WA Branch President for a timely and relevant editorial in *inCite* 12, 13 August 1990.

Kay highlights three critical areas in the library and information profession for the 90s; ALIA's role; cooperation between the members, presenting a unified professional viewpoint; and the individual's professional profile within the employing institution.

As members of a changing profession we need to be flexible and able to change our practices to meet new challenges; we need to be aware of issues which will affect our professional role and the way in which the changing demands of our clientele can be met; and we certainly should be *sharing and listening and using our united talents...* and... *raising the consciousness of the community to the skills of the information professional in this the information age...*

The 1990/91 Strategic plan will provide a focus for identifying ALIA's role as an association, representative of, and representing its members. This strategic plan should not be static but one which through input from all members reflects the proactive role that the members are playing, and should continue to play, in the community through the 90s.

It was indeed timely that after reading Kay's comments about not *defining ourselves as 'types' of librarians* (and we all do that) and while probing the issue of accountability as part of South Australia's contribution to the 1990/91 Strategic plan, that the 15 April 1990 issue of the *Library journal* came across my

LETTERS continued next page...

WHO'S WHERE

Neil McLean is the new Associate Librarian (Management Services) at Macquarie University.

Neil's early library career was as a trainee librarian at the Hatfield Polytechnic, where in due course he became Deputy Polytechnic Librarian in 1974. He was appointed Head of Library Services at the Polytechnic of Central London (PCL) in 1979, remaining there for 10 years.

He has long advocated the application of information technology in academic institutions. He established a strong research program at PCL in the field of information technology, beginning with the formation of the Library Technology Centre (now the Library and Information Technology Centre) in 1982.

In the latter stage of his career at PCL he was very involved in a range of projects sponsored by the European Economic Commission, most of them aimed at developing the information services market in Europe. He was successful in raising over \$2 million in research funds between 1982 and 1989.

The post at Macquarie University has resulted from a restructuring of senior management. It embraces the management of human resources, collection management, systems, budget control and general library administration.

Glenda Rowsell has recently been appointed Training and Support Executive at Datatrek (Australasia) Pty Ltd, Sydney.

Glenda has held a number of positions with NSW TAFE Library Services, most recently as Information Services Librarian at Sydney Technical College.

She will be responsible for Datatrek's software support and customer liaison.



Frances Roberts (Turner) has been appointed to the position of Deputy Librarian at the Northern Territory University. Frances was formerly Reader Services Librarian (Coburg campus), Phillip Institute of Technology, Melbourne. She has also worked at CSIRO Central Library, National University of Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur), La Trobe University and University of Sydney.



Frank Willems has been promoted to the position of Acting College Librarians with the Catholic College of Education Sydney from June. Previously Frank was the User Services Librarian with the College.



Gayle Villaume, BA (LS), GDCM, ALIA, RMAA, has accepted the position of Managing Director of SAZTEC Information Services Pty Limited, following the retirement of Garry Bruce.

SAZTEC is an international leader in the use of computer technology, providing a range of value added services in Library Conversions and Records Management.



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desk. Herbert S White in his regular column (pp 66-67) highlighted some of these same issues in the context of professional associations — the American Library Association in particular.

Where **do** our responsibilities and subsequent accountabilities lie? As members of a professional association, as employees of a particular organisation or institution, or both?

White also raises questions about the structure of the American Library Association, why individuals belong to the parent association or not, attend conferences, etc. A timely article, in conjunction with Kay's, in the Australian context of our first ALIA national conference. We are indeed looking forward to the warm welcome of Perth and the opportunity to exchange ideas, participate and *share and listen* to each other's viewpoints.

Diane Booker

Dear Editor,

I refer to N Radford's letter on the Biennial Conference in Perth, *inCite* 16 July.

Dr Radford and the members have to decide what they want of the Biennial Conference. The Registration fee can be reduced and fees of every member of ALIA used to subsidise those who do attend. I would rather pay my own way, deduct it from my tax than stay at home and have my annual fee money used to subsidise this activity. Why shouldn't the Conference pay for itself — *ALJ* does, many continuing education activities do and it is a respectable expectation within the wider community now, as well.

This Association operates in a country of vast distances — Northern Territory, Western Australia and Tasmania will always be more expensive to reach. Should ALIA therefore only hold the Biennial in the Koala Triangle cities where it is cheaper to travel for more people? What would that say about a democratically operating association?

What evidence is offered to show that participation and professional development of young librarians and library technicians is prevented because we have a pay as you go Biennial Conference which is worth the cost of the sacrifice? Those who decide not to go to Perth because it is too expensive should flock to 1992 at Albury-Wodonga but I'll bet we have the same moaning correspondence for that conference too!

Averill MB Edwards
Immediate Past President

How to get your letter published!

- Keep it under 250 words.
- Make it legible. If handwritten, make it double spaced.
- Give a contact address and telephone number.
- Send it to: The Editor, *inCite*, Australian Library and Information Association, PO Box E441, Queen Victoria Terrace, ACT 2600.

Letters may be edited for space unless marked for publication in full or not at all.

N IN THE NEWS

Break down the barriers!

The ALIA Special Interest Group on Library and Information Services for People with Disabilities has presented two workshops in recent months to improve librarians' skills and understanding in providing services to library users with disabilities.

Such disabilities may involve impairment of sight, hearing or intellect. In one of the workshops professional actors played characters with these problems to enable practice and discussion.

Approximately 1 per cent of the population has an intellectual disability and most of these are able to take their place in the community to some extent and take up positions in the workforce. These people are likely to become library users and we need to be able to offer them an appropriate service.

Hearing impaired people use the speaker's whole face for clues to understand the conversation. It is therefore important to speak clearly, face the light, face the listener at their level (do not look up or down), be patient, be prepared to recapitulate, say if you haven't understood what is required, write message if necessary, use gestures and body language.

The message from both workshops was that librarians as service providers must become aware of the requirements of disabled library users and with this in mind should look critically at content, format and accessibility of their library collections.

May Gibbs week 28 Oct-3 Nov 1990 Read in for Nutcote

Now is the time to honour May Gibbs and to enjoy memories of Snugglepot and Cuddlepie, Bib and Bub, Mr Lizard, Mrs Snake and all she created in Gumnut Land and to raise money to buy May's home Nutcote for the Nation.

In 1990, the International Year of Literacy, please join in the Read In for Nutcote during May Gibbs Week 28 October-3 November.

To participate in the Read In for Nutcote you read a poem, short story or any part of a work of a favourite Australian writer and then donate to buy Nutcote for the Nation: Adults: \$1 (or more) per read, Children/Pensioners: 50c.

You may decide to read to yourself.

You may decide to read to a group: in a schoolroom — in a library — at a meeting or in the board room — at home or a

Collection development at the Library and Information Service of Western Australia

The first volume of Library and Information Service of Western Australia's statement on collection development policy was launched on 27 July 1990, 8 years after the 2nd edition of *Book provision and book selection: Policy and practice* was produced.

That earlier statement described the relationship between the collections of materials in the then State Reference Library and those in public libraries but gave little detailed information and contained nothing on the State Archives.

The new 198 page document is entitled *Post imperfect, future imperative: Collection development at The Library and Information Service of Western Australia Vol 1. The Alexander Library Building Collections*. It took 18 months to complete, and is the combined work of a committee comprising: Patrick Moore — chairperson, Library and Information Service of Western Australia managers, and all of the reference librarians involved in book selection, and staff of the State Archives.

The document provides a detailed analysis of the existing collections describing both their strengths and weaknesses and future collecting intentions. It also provides information on alternative collections in Western Australia.

There are limited copies available for sale at \$35 per copy from the Office of the State Librarian, telephone (09) 427 3328. Comments are welcomed and encouraged.



friend's place — at a party or a barbecue — at a picnic in the park — beside a billabong — on a mountain or in a valley — in a club or a pub — or wherever Australians gather to enjoy our rich literary heritage.

Arrange a Read In as you see fit! Australian authors have donated book awards for original and/or outstanding effort. Send details if you wish to be considered for an award. What counts is that Australians everywhere read and pay to buy Nutcote as a national treasure.

Money raised from the Read In can be deposited at any branch of the Commonwealth Savings Bank by quoting The Nutcote Trust Account No. 908 916 and Branch No. 2217 or forwarded to The Nutcote Trust, PO Box 12, North Sydney, 2059.

Let's make it hum!!!! By gum!!!!