

FEED BACK

UCRLS

NSW Group

Serials in academic libraries

The University and College Libraries Section (as it then was) held a conference on Serials in Academic Libraries at Sydney University on 27 April. The conference was attended by 45 librarians from a wide range of academic, research and special libraries.

Speakers at the conference included: Nola Cummins, Serials Processing Librarian, State Library of New South Wales, and David Butler, Manager of Systems, State Library of New South Wales, who discussed advances in serials automation at the State Library of New South; Eric Pozza of the National Library of Australia gave an interesting paper on the ADONIS Experiment: The Electronic Serial, which he was involved with as National Library Coordinator, offering suggestions regarding the future of the electronic serial; Evelyn Woodbery, FASTECH Coordinator, Bond University, gave a paper on the Swets Serial Service which Bond University Library uses, and this paper gave us

some very interesting insights into automated methods of bulk receipt of serials; Colin Baker of the International Serials Agency addressed the group on innovations in service of serials agents in Australia, and the day finished with a paper by Aileen Stevenson, Librarian, University of Western Sydney — Hawkesbury, who discussed serials in the new universities, collection development issues. This was followed by a lively panel discussion on automation issues.

UCLS (NSW) has been approached by Dr Toby Burrows, Editor, *Australian and New Zealand journal of serials librarianship*, who is interested in publishing the papers from the conference so we hope that we will see the papers appearing in a forthcoming issue of this new journal.

Award restructuring

On a chilly night last June, Tom McKeon, ALIA Industrial Information Officer, addressed a lively meeting attended by 45 librarians on award restructuring.

Tom explained that award restructuring had originated from national wage cases and was an attempt to remove restrictive work practices to promote efficiency in the workplace. Award restructuring has the support of the ACTU who see it as a way of restructuring awards, setting pay relativities, promoting productivity and efficiency. This is, in fact, a long way from the origins of the Australian arbitration system which has its roots in principles of equity and wage justice for workers. Award

restructuring is about establishing skill related work paths for workers. The application of education and training should lead to the elimination of impediments to multi-skilling and the possibility of redesigning jobs to be more varied and fulfilling.

Tom said that librarians have usually benefited in pay increases when they were banded with other professional groups, for example, when put into the same stream as engineers. Library technicians have not generally been seen as technicians, but rather as members of the clerical stream.

Enterprises with a budget of over \$200 000 now have to set aside 1 per cent of their budget for training. This relates to award restructuring as a set of principles which can be used in a number of ways, including skills training. The level of contribution which employers make to skills training will be monitored, as will the training provided, which must relate to skills. The government is drawing up guidelines. If employers do not use the appropriate level of funding from their budgets for training then they will be taxed on the amount. In answer to a question, it was established that an employer's budget for training could include study leave and the HECS.

Pat Howard ■

Librarians in the 'Clever Country'

Information delivery for wealth, government and our heritage

At the opening ceremony of the Perth Conference, Dr Geoff Gallop, MLA, Minister for Education in Western Australia said:

'Libraries are an important part of the information industry, one of the modern economy's great growth areas.

'In common with other OECD countries Australia (and particularly Western Australia) is seeking to be an important part of this economic growth by stimulating knowledge-based industries. These industries are characterised by the use of information technology, service orientation, and value-added information transfer.

'Knowledge-based, or information industries, depend upon a labour force which is highly educated and skilled in retrieving, manipulating,

communicating and transforming information.

'Indeed it would be said that access to information is crucial if we are to become a truly educated society.

'Which leads me to wonder why we speak of our desire to become a 'Clever Country' or a 'Skilled Society'. I have met clever people who are narrow and insensitive and skilled people who are dour and inflexible. Education, on the other hand implies openness and tolerance, flexibility and creativity.

'There is little doubt that information is crucial to education. Coupled with interpretation and analysis information makes for the educated society. That ought to be our primary objective. After all it is

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impossible to imagine an educated society that is not also a civilised society, a democratic society and a productive society.

Libraries are part of this information industry. Over ten thousand libraries deliver information daily to all parts of Australian business, government, education and society. Together they represent an annual investment of over \$1 billion.

The skills which librarians possess make them a significant part of the organisations they serve. These skills include the ability to retrieve, organise and disseminate information in ways which enable clients to perform their tasks more efficiently, and with the increased certainty gained from knowledge.

As the Australian economy responds to the challenges of increased competition from Asia and Europe, certainty and knowledge will be critical success factors in this response. Governments and industries which are informed will be more likely to succeed in times of great and rapid change.

Librarians therefore play a significant role in the creation of wealth, the efficiency of government, and the preservation of our cultural and historical heritage. ■

Library automation in the 90s

Free seminar in Chicago

Are you attending the ALA Mid-Winter Conference in Chicago? If so, you should know that RMG Consultants are sponsoring and conducting this seminar on 11 January 1991.

At the seminar, presidents and representatives of the country's largest automated system vendors will each present views on the future of library automation in the coming decade. Attendees will be given an opportunity to direct questions to panellists. The program will begin at 9 am CST and end at noon, and will be held at a location yet to be assigned by ALA.

RMG are currently carrying out a feasibility study for the four WA academic libraries on the subject of a Joint Western Australian Academic Library System.

For further information please contact Mac Horn, the Systems Librarian, UWA (and JWAALS Project Administrator) on (09) 380 2359, or by fax on (09) 380 1012. ■



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National Centre for Australian Studies

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