



## Strutting about the bush

**C**ooley, or, the trackers of Glenferry is a delightful publication from the National Library of Australia. This is an account of three children lost in the bush in Victoria, written and illustrated by William Strutt. In 1864 Isaac, Jane and Frank Duff became lost in the bush and were found alive after 9 days. This incident inspired a painting by Strutt in the following year, and an illustrated short story which he completed in 1901 and which remained unpublished until now. The manuscript and sketches for the work are now in the National Library of Australia.

The story is highly melodramatic, of course, ('Father, why didn't you come sooner? We were cooeing for you.') and crammed with local colour - it was intended for an English audience. Wombats, lyre birds, possums, snakes and rude huts decorate the chapter headings, and Aboriginal trackers come to the rescue. This little book is a splendid period piece, and it is marvellous that it will now reach a wider audience in this nicely designed and printed edition. *Cooley, or, the trackers of Glenferry*, written and illustrated by William Strutt, was published by the National Library of Australia in 1989 and costs \$17.95. (ISBN 0 642 10466 2)

## The O'Neill Collection

The collection described in Terence and Frances O'Neill's *Australian children's books to 1980*, which the National Library of Australia published in January 1989, has an interesting origin. Its nucleus was a collection of 700 books made during Brenda Niall's research for *Australia through the looking-glass: Children's fiction 1830-*

*1980*, which Melbourne University Press published in 1984. The O'Neills added to it in good book sleuth fashion, 'jostling for bargains at fetes and book fairs, searching for hidden treasures in opportunity shops and weekend markets'.

By 1986 there were about 2000 titles, and the collection was offered to the National Library of Australia, a fortunate move for students of Australian children's literature, for only 50 per cent of the books were already held. Those not held are now in the National Library of Australia, most of the remaining books in the O'Neill Collection being acquired by the Baillieu Library of the University of Melbourne.

The main strength of this bibliography lies in children's novels, particularly those published in the 19th and early 20th century. It is a useful supplement to Marcie Muir's *A bibliography of Australian children's books*, listing many items 'not in Muir', and some indeed 'not in Ferguson'. The collection also includes a large number of translations of Australian children's books, including 38 translations of Ethel Turner, and a number of foreign-language children's books set in Australia.

Entries are very detailed, especially for items not listed in the standard bibliographies, and there are frequent helpful annotations. There are author, title, illustrator and subject indexes. This is a very useful contribution to the bibliography of Australian children's books. *Australian children's books to 1980: A select bibliography of the collection held in the National Library of Australia*, compiled by Terence and Frances O'Neill, was published by the National Library of Australia in 1989 and costs \$22.95. (ISBN 0 642 10464 6)



**Steve O'Connor** was appointed University Librarian, University of Technology, Sydney in late January. Steve has had extensive experience in academic libraries including the Universities of Wollongong and New England. He was until recently the Associate Librarian (User Services) at the University of Western Australia. In taking up this appointment he has resigned as the Chairman of the ALIA 1990 Biennial Conference but is still Chair of the Sponsorship Committee.

## Dandenong TARDIS

**T**he Dandenong Valley Science Fiction Collection to be commonly known as TARDIS, was launched recently at Springvale Public Library, Dandenong Regional Library Service (DVRLS), in conjunction with the Dandenong Valley Science Fiction and Futurist Society.

TARDIS has meaning to science fiction savants, being an allusion to keeping order, but in our context it assumes the form of an acronym for Texts And Relative Data In Springvale. TARDIS includes works about science fiction, film, art, poetry, bibliographies, indexes and encyclopedias.

TARDIS has been 10 years in the making by slow and extremely economical acquisition, including over a thousand titles from discards direct from Victorian municipal libraries and anthologies transferred from Minterlib Store. Special thanks are due to Northcote, Brighton and Central Gippsland for their consignments in recent years.



Colin Watson, President of the Science Fiction and Futurist Society, introduces author Lee Harding.

While there are some excellent research collections in Australian universities, the aspiration for TARDIS is to provide a retrospective collection in the public library lending system.

While hopefully we hold most of the works of almost all important writers of the last 150 years, we still hold but a small fraction of the vast output of titles, much of which is only in paperback.

So, please consider DVRLS when discarding withdrawals of science fiction, particularly anthologies and story collections, and for passing on paperback donations unfit for your open shelves.

Colin Watson  
Regional Librarian

