

In the News

Russell Cope retires

Parliamentary Librarian of NSW, 1962-91

Russell Cope was born in Melbourne on 21 July 1931. He undertook all of his tertiary education on a part-time basis, graduating BA in 1952, MA (Hons) in 1964, both from the University of Sydney, and PhD (UNSW) in 1975. At that time studying for a doctorate on a part-time basis while in employment was unusual, and required special approval of both university and parliamentary authorities.

Russell Cope joined the staff of the Parliamentary Library on 1 March 1949. The library then had a staff of ten. He moved progressively through the ranks, and was appointed Parliamentary Librarian on 5 September 1962, by which time the staff of



Russell Cope

the library numbered eleven. He was only the seventh Parliamentary Librarian to hold office since 1856. He retired from Parliamentary service on 21 July this year, having completed over 42 years in the service of the Parliament, and having held the office of Parliamentary Librarian for over 28 years. At the time of his retirement the library had grown to 33 staff.

In recognition of his contribution to librarianship, the Library Association of Australia made him a Fellow in 1968. He became an Extraordinary Member of the Verein Deutscher Bibliothekare in 1973. He was also the inaugural President of the Association of Parliamentary Librarians of Australasia from 1983 until 1985.

Throughout his professional career Russell Cope has been particularly interested in official publications, and their treatment and

use in libraries. Another continuing interest was parliamentary librarianship itself.

Russell Cope's administration of the New South Wales Parliamentary Library saw the introduction of specialised reference and information services for Members of parliament in the 1960s, and the relocation of the library to its modern premises in 1980. His final major achievement has been the introduction of the library's highly successful automation project, launched late in 1990 as part of the library's Sesquicentennial Celebrations. His retirement was marked by speeches of appreciation in Parliament, and a farewell dinner was hosted by the President of the Legislative Council The Honourable Max Williss, MLC, and The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, The Honourable K R Rozzoli, MP.

Outside these professional interests Russell Cope is an accomplished linguist, especially in German, the subject of his MA and PhD degrees. He has also built up an extensive collection of contemporary Australian pottery, fine examples of which adorned his office. Some were occasionally displayed in the library's showcases and a large proportion of it is now housed in the Powerhouse Museum.

As a librarian, Russell Cope has always been an avid reader and book collector. His retirement will afford him the opportunity to enjoy in a more leisurely way many of the books which he has collected during his working life.

Richard Baker
Acting Parliamentary Librarian

Research in universities hampered Infrastructure is 'seriously inadequate'

The lack of infrastructure is seriously hampering research in Australian universities. This is the conclusion of a recent meeting of the Pro-Vice-Chancellors (Research) Committee.

'Library resources and computer facilities are inadequate, buildings are overcrowded and poorly maintained equipment is often out of date,' Professor Max Neutze, the Committee Chairman said. 'Australian research cannot keep up with its international competitors and train postgraduates for the 21st century if it has to be carried out on outmoded equipment.'

'To make matters worse, other government funding bodies and private firms that contract with the universities to carry out research assume that the government funds those facilities in universities. As a result they refuse to provide funds for overheads, including infrastructure.'

'At most the government infrastructure funding provides part of the infrastructure need for research funded through ARC and National Health and Medical Research Council grants. Other bodies funding research will need to be prepared to provide funds for infrastructure as well as salaries and operating



Professor Max Neutze

costs. If they do not the research itself will suffer.'

Research infrastructure funds from the Australian Research Council, for example, provide only 11.6 cents for every dollar received by universities from competitive grants, which is much less than the cost of infrastructure to the universities.

Dr Neil Radford, Chairman of the

Committee of University Librarians (CAUL), comments, 'There is no doubt that Australian university libraries are severely affected by the declining funding of research infrastructure.'

'The worst affected are the libraries in the new universities, which lack research strength but find themselves expected to support research across a broad range of disciplines. These libraries have been given no adequate funding to create research collections.'

'The older university libraries are caught in a double dilemma. On the one hand they are increasingly unable to maintain the strength of their collections and services because their parent institutions' funding is inadequate. On the other hand they find themselves called upon by the newer institutions to provide the basic research back-up which they cannot provide themselves.'

'The Ross Report on library provision in higher education institutions found that the library costs of postgraduate and research users are ten times the costs of undergraduates. This must be taken into account by any institution which aspires to increase its research activity, but there is no evidence that any institution has taken it seriously, or, indeed, is even in a position to take it seriously.'

\$5 million boost helps libraries

The Victorian Minister for Education and Training, Barry Pullen, recently announced a \$5 million Study Resources Program to boost library resources for the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE). The Study Resources Program is part of the State Government's commitment to the implementation, administration and resourcing of the VCE. The VCE will be fully implemented in 1992.

One of the main aims of the Study Resources Program will be to provide grants to all Government secondary colleges for the purchase of additional library books and equipment to assist VCE students and teachers. Also, six teachers will be appointed to

public libraries over the next few months as part of a joint initiative by the Ministry of Education and Training and the Ministry for the Arts. The teachers will work with VCE teachers and librarians to improve the availability of resources to VCE students.

As well as these initiatives, the budget for the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board (VCAB) which is responsible for the

implementation and administration of the VCE has been increased by \$2.8 million.

'We have no indication as yet of how these grants will be distributed,' commented Maelor Himbury, Secretary of the Schools Libraries Section, Victorian Group, 'but we hope that this extra funding will be of some real benefit. It's all a question of how the money is actually channelled to the libraries.'

Preservation matters!

The ACLIS National Taskforce

We are still working hard to develop an effective communication system between National and State ACLIS Preservation Committees, but so far it continues to elude the skills and talents of all concerned. We hope that the appearance of a regular 'preservation column' in *inCite* will contribute in a small way to improving the situation. The National Taskforce and the State ACLIS Preservation Committees will take turns in preparing articles of general interest from time to time.

The news from the National Taskforce is that we have helped to prepare two background papers for the conference 'Towards 2001: Linking Australians and their Heritage'.

The ALIA Preservation Special Interest Group and all ACLIS Preservation Committees are devoting considerable effort to planning the preservation component of the ALIA conference in Albany in 1992.

In the coming year the National Taskforce aims to:

- prepare a report on the provision of microfilming services throughout Australia, based on the results of surveys conducted by each of the State ACLIS Preservation Committees;
- examine the recommendations relating to preservation from the report on Library Provision in Higher Education Institutions;
- improve the communication and cooperation between the National Taskforce, State Preservation ACLIS Committees, State ACLIS Committees, and National ACLIS.

The Taskforce has also asked Ross Harvey from Monash University to conduct a survey of the preservation training programs currently offered by Australian tertiary training institutions.

Jan Lyall
ACLIS National Taskforce, and
Director, Preservation Services, NLA

A good-news budget

State Library of Victoria gets extra funding

Management and staff at the State Library of Victoria are very pleased with the budget outcome. In particular the commitment demonstrated by the Government to begin to address the long history of under resourcing is very significant in light of the drastic cuts made to almost every other government agency.

Not only was the recurrent budget (salaries and operating) protected — i.e. suffered *no* cuts — but an additional \$500 000 was provided to:

- enhance the book vote by \$200 000 to \$1.3 million;
- enhance the conservation effort by \$100 000;
- purchase equipment/materials to bar-code and security-tag the collection; and
- upgrade the computer system.

Funding for the completion of the first stage of the redevelopment — the two new buildings on the Russell Street ends of the site — was provided (\$10 million) and for the continuation of the design documentation for the next stage.

Even the Works & Services budget provided good news in that funds were made available to complete the foyer refurbishment and to progress a large number of projects which will progress occupational health and safety provisions for staff and public.

For the first time in possibly 20 years or more the State Library has been given preferential treatment, with indication that this is just the beginning of better times to come.

Leah Mann

Director, State Library of Victoria □

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UNESCO Australia

New journal from the National Commission

Volume 1 Number 1 of

UNESCO Australia has a number of articles on library matters. These include a feature by editor Bill Burford, the National Commission's Public Affairs Officer, on 'Phnom Penh Library lives again'.

Bill brings up to date the story on the successful aid to the distressed National Library of Cambodia (NLC), reported last year in *inCite* (Vol. 11 No. 19). Much of the urgent work of building reconstruction has now been completed — electrical work, plumbing and drainage, flooring and windows.

In another on-site preservation activity at NLC, Judy Ledgerwood from Cornell University (USA), is completing a project which will result in the valuable items in the library's collection being preserved on microfilm with multiple copies being held in more than one location.

NLC has, however, many remaining problems. There is no budget and, so, no acquisitions policy, and there is no trained staff. Still many organisations and individuals care about the library's future:

A recent feature item by Sue Aitkin of the *Canberra Times* which included a plea for practical donations to Cambodian libraries, brought gifts of some 40 typewriters and many books and videos (much of this will be freighted to Phnom Penh by the Cultural Relations Branch of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade).

Dr Helen Jarvis of the School of Librarianship at the University of New South Wales, with help from the National Library of Australia and, probably, the National Commission, plans to run two training workshops for Cambodian library staff during December and January in Phnom Penh. It is also proposed that (later in 1992), several of their librarians will be able to get several months of hands-on experience in library techniques and management in Australia in a program yet to be finalised with the National Library of Australia.

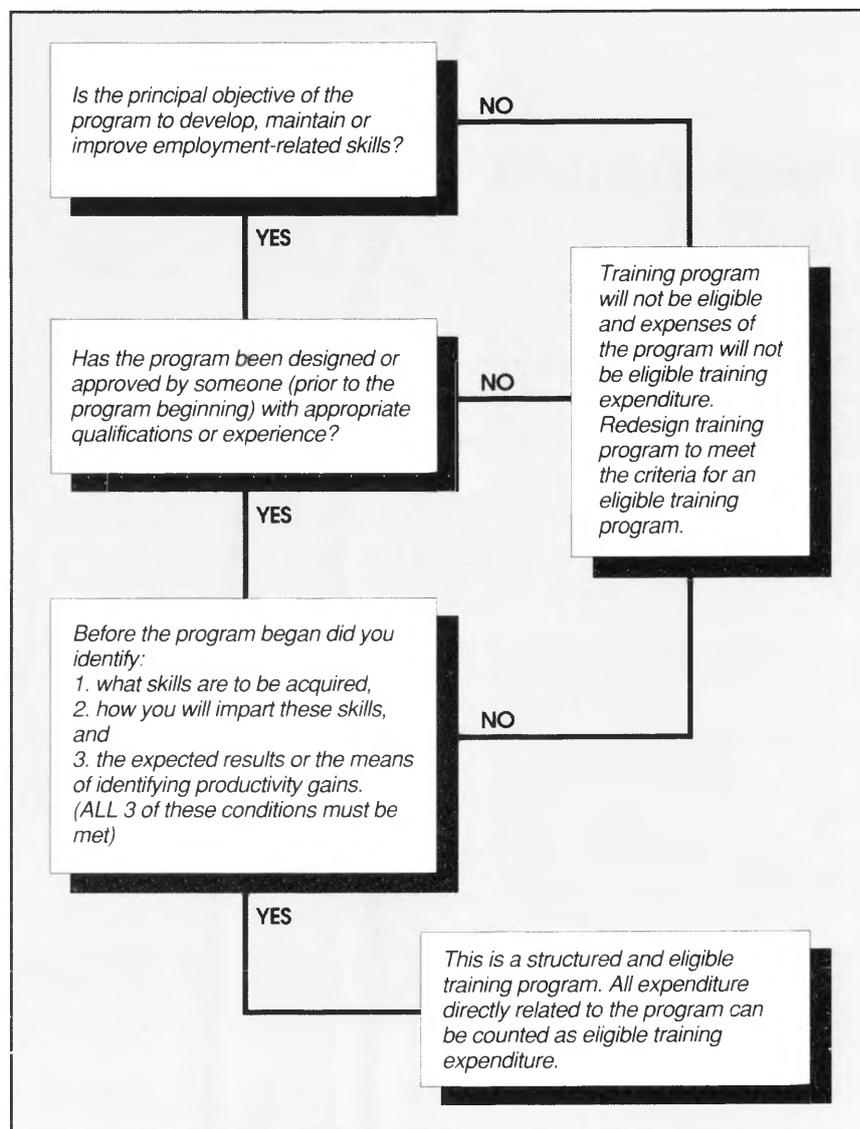
Other stories in *UNESCO Australia* refer to a school libraries project in Vanuatu, and literacy projects in Thailand and in Asia generally. Two

Is it an eligible training program?

Readers of *inCite* may have been impressed by the note on 'Achieving Excellence — now under the Training Guarantee Scheme', that Rosemary Bell and her colleagues put into *inCite* 11, p 8.

This scheme is a new and vital factor that all seminar and conference organisers should watch out for, because it may have an important effect on the number of registrations you can attract. Employers will be strongly influenced by the 'eligibility' or otherwise of an activity when asked to release staff for training.

What are the features that ensure eligibility? The ATO publication, *The Training Guarantee — your questions answered*, offers this chart to illustrate the criteria:



Australians, Associate Professor Barbara Posten-Anderson, Kuring-gai Campus, University of Technology (Sydney), and Joe Hallein, Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education (Monash), have worked on the schools project in conjunction with the Vanuatu Ministry of Education to plan strategies and organise workshops relevant to the needs of the region.

UNESCO Australia is available free of charge to interested libraries. Contact the Editor, UNESCO Secretariat, International Organisations Branch,

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Administrative Building, Parkes, ACT 2600.

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Anyone prepared to donate/sell a copy of the first four Library Technician Conference papers (1980/1983/1985/1987) to the WA Library Technicians Section, please contact Linley Thornber on (09) 387 0720 or Library, CSIRO, WA Laboratories, Private Bag, PO Wembley, WA 6014.