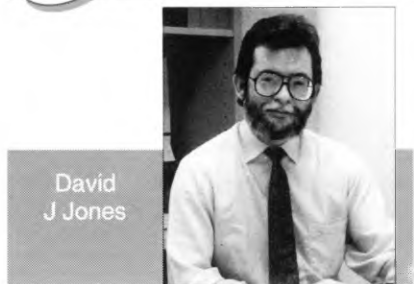


# The Source



David  
J Jones

## Short 'n' sweet

*Good science books for children* is an annotated list compiled by Lynne Babbage and Eleanor Stodart. Includes books for 'reading, thinking and doing', selecting books for 'accuracy, interest, variety of styles, and for that extra spark of inspiration that will challenge and extend the reader'. Arranged by age group. Title index. \$2 plus \$1 postage from the Children's Book Council of Australia, ACT Branch, PO Box 420, Dickson, ACT 2602. (ISBN 0 909612 10 2)

## PANegyric

There are thousands of Australian and overseas periodicals dealing with the environment, many published by small but lively bodies, and many, because of their specialised nature, not widely held in public libraries. To help increase awareness of and access to a number of these publications, Catherine Pleteshner and Frank Fisher have produced *The periodicals access network*, a directory of overseas periodicals held by environmentally and socially concerned organisations and individuals in the Melbourne metropolitan area. The pilot edition covers only works in the English language, but its editors hope that future support will enable it to spread its coverage to other languages and to Australian publications. There are 18 participants in the first edition, ranging from individual academics to World Vision of Australia, with contact names and addresses and an indication of the range of interests of the body or individual: a good way of cultivating contacts. Reasonably full details of the publications and of holdings are given, and there is a good subject index. *PAN* is rounded off with a list of 'other environmentally and socially concerned organisations' in the Melbourne metropolitan area, a diverse listing including the Council of Fly Fishing Clubs and Project Jonah. Catherine Pleteshner and Frank Fisher's *The periodicals access network* was published by the National Centre for Research and Development in Australian Studies, Monash University, in 1990. It costs \$9.95 post free. (ISBN 0 7326 0191 6)

## ALED II

Sitting on my shelf is a very well-thumbed copy of the first edition of *Australian libraries: the essential directory*, edited by the redoubtable Bundys, dog-eared but still much used. And now I can throw it out, for a second edition is now with us. Published in April 1991, *ALED2* is in the same format as its predecessor, but twice as thick, with basic information in one alphabet — names of libraries, addresses, telephone, telex, fax and electronic mail numbers, names of senior staff, sometimes staff numbers and collection size. It covers academic, public joint use and special libraries — school libraries are not included.

There are useful cross references from acronyms and abbreviations, or simple explanations. *ALED* also includes Australian library and information-related organisations, some consultants, library suppliers, library periodicals. A subject index of collection strengths — based on questionnaire responses and to be used with caution because it is not exhaustive — is a new feature. Judging by a quick sampling of *ALED2* generally, the entries look pretty up-to-date — the editors attempted to verify all telephone and fax numbers immediately before publication, which must have been a major exercise in its own right.

'Entries for personal names preceded by a forename are listed by the forename eg. *Judith Smith*', the introduction tells us — so get used to looking for Alan Walker under 'A', and for the Sir Jack Egerton Collection under 'S'. Although the J K Avery Resource Centre is under 'A'. Still, if you do as the editors suggest, and 'browse through it to become familiar with the essential information', you will become well aware of its idiosyncrasies, as well as its usefulness. So buy it, use it, and send comments and suggestions for additions and improvements to the editors, who, dear souls, will bring out *ALED3* in 1993. *ALED2* is reasonably priced at \$26 plus \$4 postage, and is available from Auslib Press, PO Box 622, Blackwood, SA 5051. (ISSN 1031-5187)

## A Koori voice

*Koori mail* is a new fortnightly tabloid which aims to provide information on issues important to Kooris, 'striving to give a Koori perspective and greater detail than is generally available' in the general media. Judging by its first issue, dated 23 May 1991, it seems to be right on target, with a concentration and a spread of news of Aboriginal interest which I certainly haven't seen in the metropolitan dailies. As well as news items, there are features, such as an article on tracing an Aboriginal family tree, book reviews, a Koori kids corner and sports pages. *Koori mail* should prove a valuable means of communication for the Aboriginal community, and very informative too for those who want to

know more about the lives and interests of our fellow Australians. *Koori mail* is published fortnightly, and is available from PO Box 117, Lismore, NSW 2480. An annual subscription is \$25. (No ISSN)

## The rural challenge

How do you develop library services for rural communities in countries with many native languages, low literacy, no local literature or a totally oral tradition? How would you cope, if you had a donated bookmobile, but no petrol? How long would you stay in the job if you had to pay for books missing from your library? These are examples of the challenges facing librarians in rural areas of some developing countries, many of whom contributed papers to a 3-day workshop on rural libraries and community resource centres, sponsored by the Commonwealth Library Association (COMLA) and held in Sydney in 1988.

The proceedings of this workshop, together with papers from a 1990 workshop with a similar focus, were published last year by the International Association of Rural and Isolated Libraries (IARIL). Of particular interest are papers on rural libraries in Malaysia and Papua New Guinea, as well as country reports from places such as Kiribati and the Solomon Islands. The proceedings of the workshops, edited by Roy Sanders and James Henri, were published as *Rural libraries and community resource centres* by IARIL in 1990. Copies are available from IARIL, PO Box 38, Turvey Park, NSW 2650, at \$25. (ISBN 0 646 00522 7)

## Adult literacy and libraries

During International Literacy Year, 1990, a highly successful seminar on adult literacy was held by the Public Libraries Division of the State Library of Queensland.

This seminar focused on the ways librarians can contribute to existing adult literacy services, including resource provision. Participants were treated to a series of stimulating papers, providing overviews of the issues, and getting down to specifics, such as the literacy needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and the special needs of ESL (English as a second language) learners. Christine Dwyer told her audience how to create a positive environment in libraries, and Marion Norton, ILY Program Manager for Queensland, tackled the thorny topic of readability. The papers, which are short (and readable!), have been published as *Adult Literacy Seminar: A Public Libraries Division Seminar*, and are now available from the PLD at 24 Macquarie Street, Tenerife, Qld 4005. (ISBN 0 7242 4162 0)

continued next page...

## Aussies get physical

In 1823 Governor Brisbane reported on experiments with pendulums at Parramatta. And over the next century and a quarter there were countless other Australian contributions to the literature of physics, from the sublime of subatomic particles to the friction of wool particles. This wealth of literature is captured in R W Home's *Physics in Australia to 1945*, which is a bibliography and biographical register of people working and writing in physics in our country from the earliest times to the end of World War II.

The bibliography attempts to be exhaustive, but of course within certain bounds — only publications are included, and juvenilia, ephemera, internal reports and manuscripts materials are not represented. Similarly journalistic efforts and letters to the editor and the like — except for letters to journals such as *Nature* are eschewed. The result is a manageable 200-odd pages, revealing the work of several hundred men and women, including giants such as Bragg and Oliphant, and others who, to this day, remain just names. A lot of detective work has gone into this most valuable compilation, and the number of such 'unknowns' is mercifully small. *Physics in Australia to 1945* by R W Home was published in 1990 by the Department of History and Philosophy of Science, University of Melbourne, and the National Centre for Research and Development in Australian Studies at Monash University. Copies are available from D W Thorpe at \$55. (ISBN 0 7326 0182 7)

## No more damn lies

The range of statistical work carried out by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has always been impressive, and of late the sophistication of their statistical products has been breathtaking, making data easier to access and to manipulate (in the nicest sense) than ever before. *Australia — working it out* is a new ABS publication, developed in consultation with teachers and curriculum advisers as a resource for the Victorian Certificate of Education Australian Studies course. It introduces the principles of statistics — how data are collected, classified, organised and interpreted — and then follows a key theme in Australian society, as reflected in statistics: work, and everything which flows from it.

National accounts, labour force statistics, population settlement, unemployment, distribution of wealth, the value of unpaid work, production technology, imports and exports — all are put into context and explained in a very readable and jargon-free text, carved into easily assimilable chapters. There are

copious examples from actual ABS publications, good graphics, and manageable lists of further ABS reading. An appendix offers sensible advice on elementary questionnaire design. *Australia — working it out* is well worth looking at, even if you are not a Year 11 Australian Studies student. It was published by ABS in 1990 and costs \$19.50. (ISBN 0 642 15757 X)

## Right royal bibliography

We probably all take for granted the excellent series of checklists of Australian Royal Commissions pioneered by Dietrich Borchardt, and the time we save using them, rather than floundering through indexes to parliamentary papers.

La Trobe University Library has recently published a 29-page supplement to the checklists, and a new 288-page select bibliography of works about Commonwealth and State Royal Commissions. Julie G Marshall's *The Literature on Royal Commissions, Select Committees of Parliament and Boards of Inquiry held in Australia 1856-1980* is a most welcome addition to this range of reference works.

It uses the same code numbers for commissions and inquiries as the Checklists, and gives the name of the inquiry, its dates of establishment and reporting and the name of the chairperson. For full information on the various enquiries, one needs to refer to the relevant checklist, but this volume can be used independently — there are name, chairperson and subject indexes to aid access. Only substantial articles are included in this bibliography — articles in daily newspapers are excluded — as are unpublished materials, with the exception of academic theses. Julie G Marshall's *The Literature on Royal Commissions, Select Committees of Parliament and Boards of Inquiry held in Australia 1856-1980* is another excellent and useful publication from La Trobe University Library, and is number 36 in the 'Library Publication' series. Copies are available for \$20 (plus \$4 postage) from the Library, Bundoora, Vic 3083. (ISBN 0 85816 731 X)

*Supplement to checklist of royal commissions, select committees of parliament and boards of inquiry* is 'Library Publications' number 37 and is available gratis from the same address. (ISBN 0 85816 735 2)

## Smart systems and rustproof coffee

Eighty contributors from 20 European countries have collaborated to produce a series of slices of research in science and technology in *Scientific Europe*, published by Foundation Science Europe in 1990. This is a thinking-person's coffee table book, often dealing with highly complex

and technical information, but crisply written and highly readable. The contributors have 'nothing to be modest about', as Nobel Laureate Sir George Porter points out in his foreword: 'The old continent where modern science began remains as creative as ever'. Many remarkable projects in old and new fields are described and illustrated in this glossy 508-page volume: electronic co-pilots for motorists, magnetically levitated railways, which spirit you silently at high speed, high-tech fishing boats, chemical storage of energy, medical imaging, advances in wood rot, and of course rust-resistant coffee, are just a few. The section on smart systems will be of particular interest to many library and information workers: the brief articles on laser-powered logic is especially mind-boggling. It describes research which may lead to digital computers which are thousands (possibly millions) of times faster than electronic systems. Fascinating to dip into, *Scientific Europe* was published in 1990 by Foundation Scientific Europe and is available in Australia from DA Books and Journals. It costs around A\$108.25, depending on currency fluctuations. (ISBN 90 73035 06 6)

## Report of reams of reports

Gwen Scott and Kevin Slattery's *Reports and major policy documents on education 1978* usefully fills a gap in the literature, covering materials which have been produced since publication of Cecily Brown's *Australian reports on education* in 1976. There are 642 official reports from Commonwealth and State sources in the third edition of Scott and Slattery's list, which is selective: internal documents, conference reports and administrative papers are not included. Entries are brief and unannotated, but there is a good subject index, as well as author, chairperson and title indexes. The third edition of *Reports and major policy documents on education 1978* was published in 1990 by Victoria College Library, Rusden Campus, and costs \$25. (ISBN 0 949827 19 3)

## Podostemaceae by any other name...

*Flora of Australia volume 18, Podostemaceae to Combretaceae* was published by AGPS Press in 1990. It covers nine families, including mangroves and the Podostemaceae, fascinating submerged aquatic herbs which favour swift-flowing rivers. This is another masterly volume in this standard work, which will consist of about 60 volumes published by AGPS Press over a 30 year period. The soft cover version costs \$44.95. (ISBN 644 10472 4; ISBN 0 644 10474) (pbk); ISBN 0 642 07013 X (set); ISBN 0 742 07016 4 (set: pbk)) Phew!