

Letters

ALIA's recent graduates

I read with interest the last edition of *inCite* (12 October 1992) and Susan Ainsworth's reference to the Institution of Engineers Australia (IEA) and their graduate experience deal negotiated with the relevant union.

It is a pity ALIA cannot follow in the footsteps of IEA in other ways and develop their own graduate group similar to Young Engineers Victoria.

As a recent library graduate I felt ALIA had very little to offer me as *inCite* was full of established names and seemingly unfamiliar topics, nothing else seemed available. Wouldn't it be great if we had a graduate profile page (to assist in redressing what Bev Kirby recognises as an increase in unemployment amongst the library fraternity). We (as ALIA members) could also be involved in training nights, i.e., resume writing, interview skills etc., or just an outreach group for recent

graduates (work related and socially). We could also organise conferences (with corporate sponsorship)...the possibilities are absolutely endless.

It may also assist in recruiting new members for ALIA if graduates see the Association 'doing' things that are relevant to their predicament—as Frances Clancy wrote in *inCite* (*inCite* 6, page 26) 'many people are becoming disillusioned with the service ALIA provides'. IEA faced the same problem with graduates—how to keep them professionally involved—they've also included themselves in the push for girls keeping maths and science subjects in senior secondary school.

Wouldn't it be marvellous to see ALIA likewise involved in schools and recruiting people to become librarians (or in related fields) to meet the demands of the future?

Personal Investment Magazine rated our field of expertise as the fourth fastest growing industry of the future (1991-2000) (See also *inCite* 5,

p 12—Ed). We need to jump on this bandwagon and raise the profile of librarians—the only way to do this is to nurture our graduates to take the future in their hands with skill and pride.

So, come on ALIA! Support the young dynamic librarians who are graduating with new ideas, enthusiasm and a current lack of support, those who will take libraries 'into the 21st century and beyond', as well as continuing the traditions for the 'established names'.

Victoria Baldacchino
Murrumbidgee, Victoria

Rose-tinted statistics?

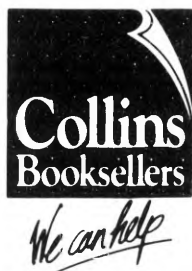
I wish to make some comments on Marion Nicolson's annual analysis of library placement survey.

Ms Nicolson comments that employers are looking for staff with between two and five years' experience. She then goes on to extol the fact that there has been 'a steady decline in the number of Librarians

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receiving the lowest salary range'. If new graduates are not getting jobs, then of course there are less people on the lowest salary.

This is not something to be pleased about. If new graduates are not being given a chance, then the profession will be the worse. New librarians bring with them up to date knowledge, particularly in the technical area. They are generally highly motivated and keen to work hard and gain experience in their chosen field.

I further take exception to Ms Nicolson's claim that 'the bulk of librarians are paid in the range from \$28 000 to \$40 999 per annum.' This is a patent case of making the figures read how you want. It would just as valid to say that the majority of librarians are paid in the range of \$25 000 to \$31 999. But of course this doesn't sound as comforting. It be more honest to say that the bulk of librarians are paid in the range of \$28 000 to \$31 999—as the table shows.

As an organisation concerned with the professional standing of its

members, ALIA should consider one of the major issues concerning their members and the perception of a career in librarianship. The majority of librarians have invested a great deal of time, and in some cases money, gaining their qualifications. Thus they should be paid a salary that recognises this, as well as the nature of the profession today. Young people frequently refuse to consider librarianship as a career option, stating that it is the most poorly paid of the professions.

Many librarians realise that their services are undervalued. However until there is some concerted effort by the whole profession, this situation will continue. I hope that Ms Nicolson's survey and this response generate some positive discussion within the profession.

Kelly Callaghan

The concubine and the book

In response to several requests already from Australian colleagues for the text of my Friday conference paper, *From priestly concubine to capitalist whore*,

the full text including comments on the Mitchell Library, a Freudian analysis of DiNK (the Distributed National Collection) and my trialing at the conference of my theoretical concept of Distributed National Publication (DNP) is now available. Copies autographed by the author (to guarantee authenticity) are available from 16B Hadfield Terrace, Wellington, New Zealand, on advance payment of \$A10 (cash please, no cheques), post free by airmail. The text to be published in the Conference *Proceedings* in February or March will not include the late interpolations which have attracted so much attention.

Several Australian librarians have also asked for details of my recent book. As mentioned by the chairpersons at my two sessions at Conference, it has not yet been reviewed in Australia. The title is *Committed to Print; Selected Essays in Praise of the Common Culture of the Book*, and it is published by Victoria University Press, Wellington at \$NZ 24.95 post free.

J E Traue ■

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