

Vic Branch Council at Sovereign Hill

Andrew Shiells, President of the Ballarat Province Regional Group, reports on a 'very special' ALIA day

The Day, organised by the Ballarat Province Regional Group and the Victorian Branch Council, attracted around 25 participants to each session.

The initial impetus for the ALIA day was a Victorian Branch brainstorming session held early this year. The Branch wished to promote their relevance to regional Victoria, and Ballarat volunteered to host a Council meeting 'with extras'.

The sessions were held at Sovereign Hill to ensure atmosphere and conviviality. The day began with a Branch Council meeting, followed by lunch and then champagne tasting at the nearby Yellowglen vineyard. At 5.30pm a productive hour of brainstorming for the 1996 Biennial conference, to be held in Melbourne, took place, with many innovative ideas being aired. Roll on 1996!

Pre-dinner drinks and dinner followed, with guest speaker Dr Gabrielle Baldwin, Senior Lecturer at the Higher Education Advisory and Research Unit (HEARU), Monash University. Dr Baldwin presented a thought provoking paper on 'gender roles in libraries', which gave rise to a lively post-dinner discussion. The day was voted a great success.

The exercise proved to a most valuable experience for the Regional Group. Holding a Branch Council meeting outside the metropolitan area worked well and Victorian Branch are to be congratulated for supporting this innovative move. ■

When ants carry elephants

The library profession and the International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples

Margaret Gaff reports on a paper by Jennifer Cram, ALIA President, presented in Darwin 5 July 1993, just prior to the RAISS *Infobridges* Conference. This is the second publication in the Northern Territory's series, *Professional Development for Isolated Library Staff*.

We have come to expect an entertaining and thought provoking paper from Jenny Cram and this one is no exception. She leads us, through story and metaphor, to a perspective on library services and their management that gives truth to the complexity of our profession

and our society today. The paper reflects Jenny's breadth of reading and her understanding, not only of the familiar bottom line of the shrinking budget, reduced or stretched services and the ubiquitous and horrible user-pays principle, but also of the top line of human and cultural values. She speaks of the chaotic reality with which we wrestle endlessly, in spite of the best efforts of the economic rationalists to ignore it on our behalf.

A video tape is available through your Branch Training and Development Section, from The NLA and the Northern Territory Film Library. ■

CD-ROM user education

Liz Lee reports on an informal CD-ROM discussion group held at Adelaide's Barr Smith Library in July

The session attracted approximately 35 librarians who exchanged ideas about CD-ROM user education with colleagues from other institutions. Australian university libraries have been surveyed regarding their CD-ROM user education programs and copies of leaflets were requested. Seventeen libraries have so far responded, and well over 100 leaflets have been collected from interstate and overseas institutions.

A compilation of replies and a list of the leaflets received was provided for the session participants, and display copies of the leaflets were available for perusal. In-house tutorials held by the Barr Smith Library, including several purchased from Monash University and our own Medline in-

house tutorial, were available for participants to try out. A bibliography of general references on CD-ROM user education and material relevant to specific databases had also been compiled. Participants were enthusiastic about the usefulness of the session.

The Barr Smith Library is interested to identify colleagues who are willing to exchange leaflets and ideas as a way of pooling our talents in this rapidly burgeoning area which is eating up an increasing amount of user education staff time.

If you would like to obtain copies of the documentation, or to exchange further information, contact the Information Services Librarian, Judith Lloyd, telephone (08) 303 5067 at the Barr Smith Library, University of Adelaide. ■