

Fantastic futures

This is the second of a regular series of features which will appear in *inCite* on behalf of the Reference and Information Services Section of ALIA. The first profiled Dr Michael Spring, one of the two overseas keynote speakers for the 1995 National RAISS Conference in Adelaide.

The second overseas keynote speaker is Professor Arnold Hirshon, the University Librarian (Director of Libraries) of Wright State University, Ohio. His keynote address, *Running with the Red Queen: breaking new habits to survive in the virtual world*, will challenge existing approaches for providing customer service and will provide a practical framework for helping library staff and customers cope with the chaotic world of online information.

In Professor Hirshon's words: "...virtual information is limitless, constantly and rapidly changing. User assistance requires service at all hours to any location in the world ... the dramatic shifts in the information environment and the increased emphasis

on providing high-quality customer service is forcing us to look at what we do and how we do it.

'As the Red Queen said to Alice: "It takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!"'

Professor Hirshon has been actively re-engineering both technical and user services at Wright State University for the past four years. He has initiated the new state-of-the-art OhioLINK library system, which provides uniform access to the holdings of over 20 higher educational institutions, a statewide user-initiated borrowing system and a host of on-line indexing, abstracting and full-text resources. ■

Contributions for the next RAISS feature in *inCite* can be forwarded to: Karen Karykis, National President (RAISS), c/- Telecom National Information Resource Centre, Locked Bag 1730, Adelaide, SA 5800, or telephone (08) 230 5164, or facsimile (08) 231 3837, or e-mail kkarykis@sconthf2.telecom.com.au.

Rural and Isolated Librarians Special Interest Group (RILSIG)

RILSIG was a direct outcome of the rural and isolated librarians conference held at the Charles Sturt University in 1988. It was the first time a conference dealing solely with the role and problems of rural and isolated libraries had been held in Australia and it was felt that the impetus should be maintained.

The group started relatively slowly but now we have a committee of ten and increasing membership. Our president for 1994/1995 is Felicity Williams from the Northern Territory Library Service. We publish a newsletter, *Apbelion*, and welcome contributions from members.

The group aims to educate the library community about the unique problems facing rural and isolated libraries and to provide a support network for our members who are often the only practising librarian in their community or organisation.

We aim to raise the profile of our libraries and the essential services they provide to the rural community.

Rural libraries are often the only link rural communities have to the information resources of the world and so we find ourselves servicing diverse

client groups with very specific information needs.

Rural librarians are isolated professionally — they are isolated from other librarians and also face problems in participating in professional development activities. To attend any professional activity means travelling long distances with the associated costs and it also means leaving our libraries unattended for long periods. It is difficult to convince the managers of our organisations of the necessity of such exercises given the benefits to the organisation are often not immediately apparent, although the problems often are. Our organisation aims to lobby for more professional activities in the country and we hope to run our own seminars in the future. We also aim to provide a support and information network for our members.

Rural libraries of Australia are a valuable and highly-regarded resource in rural communities. The library community is often unaware of us and the service we give. We hope to raise the level of debate about the problems we face and ultimately to find new and innovative solutions.


Rosemary Blakeney



Subscription Services & CD-ROM

- Health & Medical
- Defence Aerospace
- Electronics
- Telecommunications

IHS AUSTRALIA Pty Limited ACN 059 947 410
 Trading as: **Hinton Information Services**
 Locked Bag 7, Eastwood NSW 2122
 Ph (02) 804 6022 Free-Call 1 800 249 721
 Fax (02) 804 7434




World Class Serials Service
Easy Access
Innovative Outsourcing

Free calls:
 Australia 008 777 134 New Zealand 0800 44 6133
 Papua New Guinea 05 08 61 055

YOU NEED THE RIGHT PERSON FAST

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN PINPOINT THAT PERSON IN 24 HOURS.



When you call our Librarians you tap into our world-first Library and Information Recruitment Database. By Boolean searching for any of 299 library skills in 10 categories we pinpoint your best candidate - and if they say yes to the job, we will have their Skills Summary on your desk in 24 hours!

Library Locums

Call our Librarians and have your 24 hours start now.
 Sydney 699-1855
 Canberra 290-1047 Brisbane 350-4043
 The Library Locums' Selection Process pinpoints the best person for you in 24 hours.