

A National Book Day for Australia

In just over 7 months' time, Australia will have its first-ever 'Book Day'. Conceived and organised by the Australian Book Publishers Association, Book Day will be a Sunday, like Mother's Day and Father's Day, when people give gifts — in this case, books — to those they love, or miss, or appreciate.

Book Day's organisers felt strongly that Book Day itself should fall on a Sunday in order to emphasise the fact that Book Day will be very much a family occasion, so Sunday, 30 July will be the date of the inaugural event. The buildup to Book Day, particularly the week leading up to it, will see a lot of media and promotional activity, and will therefore be as much a part of the event as the Sunday. So bookstores, libraries and schools can still participate

fully in Book Day, even if they are not open on the day itself.

The all-important buildup will start in early May, when Book Day's organisers will be sending out entry forms for a Book Day children's competition, as well as posters announcing the competition, to over 8 500 primary schools and 2 300 secondary schools.

Designed for children at upper primary/lower secondary age levels, the competition will ask entrants to pick a well-known celebrity of their own choice, and to tell what book/s they would give to that person on Book Day, and why. Entries will be judged on individuality and creativity of thought and expression, and prizes will include valuable sets of books.

So far, so good, but at what point do libraries come in, and



what does Book Day offer to them?

The April issue of *inCite* will include a Book Day information flyer, with an order form to enable libraries to order — free of charge — a Book Day promotional kit, containing an information sheet with suggestions for displays and easy-to-organise activities, plus a selection of full colour display and promotional material, including posters and a banner.

Not content with leaving it at that, the ABPA has devised a promotional scheme to be operated as part of the buildup to Book Day, which should be a real bonus for libraries everywhere. *The Sponsor a book for your local library* scheme [see inset] has been designed to help libraries to acquire more books, and to promote the services they provide. Participation in this scheme will cost libraries nothing.

Book Day is a unique and innovative way of promoting books and book usage. It is such a strong, simple idea that most libraries should have no difficulty 'interpreting' the Book Day concept by arranging theme displays and tie-in events, tailored to their own resources and facilities.

The ABPA is confident that Book Day can provide the library service with a unique promotional platform, and hopes that Australia's libraries will play a key role in the success of next July's inaugural event. ■

The Sponsor a book for your local library scheme

- The scheme is a variation of the *Wedding present list* idea
- Each library will supply its nearest bookstore/s with a list of all the books that the library would ideally like to add to its collection
- These booklists should cover the complete range of prices everything from inexpensive paperbacks to high-price hard-covers
- Over the month leading up to Book Day, the library will display posters announcing the scheme to the public, and giving details of which nearby bookstore/s hold the libraries' 'wish-lists'
- Members of the public who see these, and wish to purchase a book on their library's behalf, simply have to go along to a nominated bookseller, and advise how much they wish to spend
- The bookseller will then match the value of the person's donation to one of the books on the library's list
- Upon receipt of the person's payment, the bookseller will inscribe the name of the donor on a book-plate which will be affixed to the inside cover of the book, before the book is handed over to the library
- Libraries will be recommended to revise their wish lists regularly while the scheme is operating
- Libraries will be at liberty to nominate nearby bookstores who may not be their usual book suppliers
- Posters announcing the scheme, blank wish list forms and batches of book-plates will all be included in the free Book Day kits obtainable via the order form to be inserted in the April *inCite*.