

Public Libraries Section (NSW)

The NSW Public Libraries Section met regularly during 1995. The main focus for this group continued to relate to the provision of training, staff development and awareness raising workshops and seminars.

Some of the activities in 1995 were held jointly with other Sections and organisations. In conjunction with the Association of Local Government Librarians NSW (ALGL) a seminar was held on *Electronic networking of council, community and government information* that attracted 80 participants including librarians and representatives from local government councils. Dr Veronica Lunn reported on her 1995 Mainerd Scholarship presenting an summary of community networking developments in the United States, and Adrian Bates presented information on VicNet.

Support from the Public Libraries Section (NSW) was given to the Local Studies Section who organised a seminar entitled the *Big picture* that looked at current issues in the management and storage of photographs. Other joint activities included a workshop on corporate libraries and enterprise bargaining.

What...? What next...? What if...?

New territory was explored in events organised by the Children's and Youth Services Section (NSW) in 1995, giving rise to lots of questions, and some answers.

Our conference in April *IT — Information technology for you people in libraries* was opened by Dagmar Schmidmaier, state librarian, who emphasised that librarians can provide a context where young people can use the technology to explore content. Keynote speaker Ross Todd, lecturer at UTS, advised us to embrace the new technologies — 'Once a new technology rolls over you, if you are not part of the steamroller, then you're part of the road.' Other speakers and demonstrators advised of the marvels and pitfalls in using multimedia and the internet. Delegates left with lots to think about in the context of their own schools and libraries.

In July, Bathurst City Library hosted a seminar *Celebrate with stories*, the first CYSS function organised in the Central region. Libby Hathorn gave a controversial address, speaking passionately about her books dealing with homeless children, and

We participated on some of the organising committees for the *Public libraries — what are they worth?*, conference held in November.

The program for 1996 will include *Being competitive*, which will suggest ways to restructure to be competitive, formation of business units, CCT and alternatives. Chris Aulich of the University of Canberra will present this seminar. *Implementation of the National Local Government Competency Standards*, and *Display techniques* are other workshops proposed, pending comments from our recent request to members to identify gaps.

A joint lobbying approach involving major professional groups, for example, ACLIS, CPLA, MPLA, and ALGL, has not progressed yet. We have agonised over the difficulties of recruitment of new members, especially senior managers, and tried to find new approaches. The current drive for members and for interest in the committee will be followed by combined efforts and ideas with NSW branch.

Val Moon
President

Specials SA

This year has been a busy one for Specials. The highlight of the year was the Internet seminar followed by practical workshops.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics demonstrated their services to special librarians. Suzanne Hall from Santos and Helen Halley from Artlab presented a talk on dealing with library disasters. This gave us the opportunity to find out how to deal with a potential disaster before, rather than after the event.

Jennifer Weimann of the DSTO talked on the compulsory competitive tendering process recently undertaken by her library. After the talk there was a tour of the Lohe Memorial Library, the third largest theological library in Australia.

Elizabeth Gatehouse and Nereda Wilkinson shared their experience in the difficult task of merging libraries — their libraries now form the Women's and Children's hospital library.

Sue Vardon (Australian Business Woman of the Year) and Vic Nicholson (Motivational Research Centre) will be the speakers at our last event of the year, *Beyond the third wave: shaping our future*.

I would like to thank Specials members for their support and wish them the best in the future.

Caryl Armstrong
President

her belief that young people should be introduced to poetic language. Kerry White, NSW judge for the CBC book of the year award, spoke about a range of good books, arguing that the shortlist was limiting and the *Notable books* publication is more valuable to teachers and librarians in selecting books.

Scenario planning, our management seminar held in October, was run by Annie Talve and Dr Howard Gwynne. Through a series of exercises we realised how quickly changes have occurred in our profession over the last ten years, and that assumptions about the role of the librarian and forecasts about the future are dangerous, as they do not prepare us for change. However, through *Scenario planning* we can think strategically about the future by posing 'What if...?' questions. By visualising a number of possibilities we can remain flexible, find a niche and a role. To do so we should focus on our client groups and find ways of giving



Ross Todd, speaking at the IT — Information technology for young people in libraries conference

them access to information, sometimes by repackaging information.

The Bess Thomas and Marjorie Cotton awards have been implemented by CYSS (NSW) to recognise an innovative project in services to young people in public libraries and personal contribution to the field of children's librarianship respectively. The awards will be made in 1996 and are designed to recognise the creativity and dedication shown by individual CYSS members.

June Brennan
President