

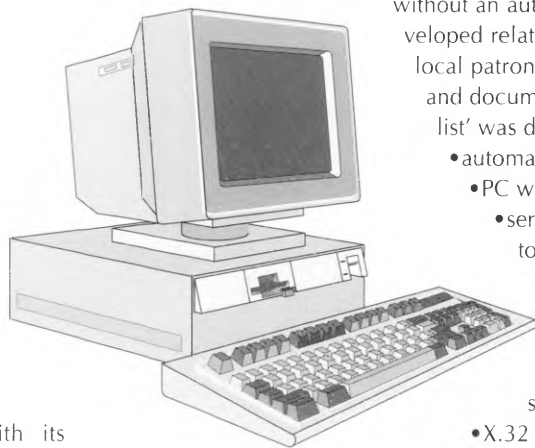
# Infowest — co-operative library access link

Late in 1993 public libraries within the Central Western zone of New South Wales (centred on the towns of Parkes, Dubbo, Warren, Bourke, Bathurst, Cobar, Orange, Lithgow, Mudgee and Grenfell) resolved to link their computer catalogues. The advantages were obvious — access to a vastly-expanded database, opportunities for large-scale resource sharing and inter-library lending schemes, and a lessening of the real (and perceived) problems of isolation, distance and inequity of resources. Furthermore, the network aims to continue the trend already begun by the Country Public Libraries Association towards closer political and economic ties between the local government libraries in the zone.

## How did they do it?

Macquarie Regional Library, with its headquarters in Dubbo, successfully applied for, and later coordinated, a NSW Library Council grant of over \$30 000 to assist in implementing the catalogue link.

Working closely with ILANET (State Library of NSW) and



a technical consultant, McMillan, Evans and Associates, Macquarie Regional Library embarked on phase one of the project — identifying technical requirements and timetabling a schedule of implementation. Initial difficulties centred on the lack of a common interface, with Dynix, Insight and URICA systems in operation throughout the zone, several libraries currently installing systems, and one library without an automated system at all. Policies were developed relating to loans procedures, precedence of local patrons, establishment of borrower categories and document delivery, and a technical 'shopping list' was drawn up. Each library required:

- automated system with spare terminal port;
- PC with VT100 terminal emulation software;
- server software (if thier system was unable to handle remote connection);
- ILANET membership, facilities and PC communication software;
- X.32 modem and software module SW320 (2 modems were considered desirable per large site);
- X.32 modem installation; and
- extra Telecom line installed to host computer.

Dubbo was connected first in June 1994 with a remote PC running as an OPAC terminal using ILANET as the intermediary. A port on Dubbo's URICA system was set aside for remote OPAC access. The modem on the PC was set up as a 9600bps X.32 pad, making dialling in to ILANET faster and more automatic.

By the end of August 1994, a review of the project led to several changes of policy, including the decision to allow universal access by all ILANET sites (not just Central Western zone libraries) and to allow access by non-ILANET users such as schools and councils, or library staff working from home on a PC.

Some delays were experienced while waiting for local automated systems to be installed, and of course, the inevitable telephone line hold-ups. However, by the end of November 1994 five of the ten libraries were connected, and the technical consultants had prepared a comprehensive manual of procedures for both technical and user documentation. Lack of PC expertise within the zone led to increased demands upon the consultants (often beyond the scope of their brief) resulting in a minor budget blow-out, and consequently lead to the decision that such costs be borne by individual libraries.

It is hoped that other public libraries will benefit from Central Western's experience, and will take up the cooperative challenge.

*Dallas Curry, Macquarie Regional Library*

## ALIA Health Libraries Section

### Anne Harrison Award 1995

#### Call for Applications

The Anne Harrison Trust Fund was established in 1987 by the then Library Association of Australia Medical Libraries Section as a tribute to the pioneering work of Anne Harrison in the development of medical librarianship in Australia. It is hoped that with the help of the Award others may be encouraged to make their own contribution in the field of medical, nursing and allied health librarianship.

#### Objectives

The Fund will provide:

1. Financial assistance for the undertaking of selected research projects designed to:
  - (a) increase the understanding of health librarianship in Australia;
  - (b) explore the potential for further development of health librarianship in Australia.
2. Financial assistance (up to \$2500) towards the enrichment of knowledge and skills of Australian health librarians which shall take the form of:
  - (a) assistance to ALIA members in meeting travel accommodation or educational expenses in undertaking an approved course of study or study tour abroad, or,
  - (b) assistance to the Health Libraries Section with the mounting of continuing education courses, or,
  - (c) assistance with the publication of works in Australian health librarianship.

#### Conditions

1. Competition for the Award shall not be limited to members of ALIA, or to librarians, provided the proposals meet the objectives of the Award.
2. No current member of the Health Libraries Section National Executive or the Administrators shall be eligible to receive a personal award from the Fund.
3. Applications shall be made using the format prescribed by the Administrators.
4. The decisions of the Administrators after ratification by the National Executive are final and irrevocable.
5. The Award shall be announced in August 1995 at the Annual General Meeting of the Health Libraries Section at Sydney, NSW.
6. All applicants shall be notified of their success or otherwise as soon as the recommendation for the Award has been ratified by the National Executive.
7. Applications close on 31 May 1995. Guidelines for Applications and further information are available from: Katherine Keily, Medical Library, Westmead Hospital, Westmead NSW 2145. Telephone (02) 633 6266. Facsimile (02) 893 8527.