

# Librarians bringing music to your ears

Information providers for Australia's largest radio network

the Arts and panel. 5.30 for 6pm. Venue to be advised. Contact Philip Kent (03) 9418 7382, Christine Mackenzie (059) 86 4062, Derek Whitehead (03) 9669 9989.

• **1/3 ASSIG Seminar** — *The future of serials* speakers include October Ivins, North American Serials Interest Group and Will Wakeling, UK Serials Group. \$95 ALIA members, \$45 students, \$125 others. Local contact Carolyn Cohn (03) 9326 5366. Registration forms Alfred Gans (07) 3371 7500, fax (07) 3371 5566, e-mail [alfred@isa.com.au](mailto:alfred@isa.com.au).

• **5/3 RAISS Victoria. Costing reference services** — a workshop for reference librarians, presented by Fay Nicholson. 9am–5pm. RVIB Prahran. ALIA \$90, others \$105, non-salaried librarians \$70. Contact Jan Miller (03) 9747 7416.

• **26/3 Victorian Branch AGM** 5pm. The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research, Royal Parade Parkville. Guest speaker Professor Sir Gustav Nossal. RSVP to Jo Marshall, e-mail [marshallj@wehi.edu.au](mailto:marshallj@wehi.edu.au), fax (03) 9345 2580.

• **28/3 Cat's whiskers and dog tales**: an evening with Andrew and Janet McLean. Children's and Youth Services Section AGM, 7.30pm at Balwyn Library, 336 Whitehorse Road, Balwyn. Contact Terry May (03) 9744 2991 or Peta Humphreys (03) 9370 5244.

## WA

• **7/2 Special Libraries Section Icebreaker** at Kondinin Group, 177 Great Eastern Highway, Belmont. Time: 5.30pm. Cost: \$8. Contact Ruth McIntyre (09) 478 3343; Fax (09) 479 7509. Places are limited.

• **13/2 Health Libraries Section meeting**. Drinks at 5.30pm in the Health Information Resources Service for Women. Meeting at 6pm in the Lecture Theatre at King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women. Consumer Health Information — a panel discussion. Drinks and nibbles \$3. Contact Tricia Scolare (09) 340 8465.

• **26/2 ASSIG Seminar** — *The future of serials* speakers include October Ivins, North American Serials Interest Group and Will Wakeling, UK Serials Group. \$95 ALIA members, \$45 students, \$125 others. Local contact Jackie Moffatt (09) 273 8633. Registration forms Alfred

continued next page...

ABC radio has the largest audience in Australia, but few consider what goes on behind the scenes. The reference libraries are the heart of the network, providing information to presenters, journalists and programmers.

There are two reference libraries in ABC Radio. One is located (along with ABC's corporate headquarters) on the fringes of the Sydney CBD in Harris Street, Ultimo. The other is similarly located on the fringes of the Melbourne CBD in the ABC's new Victorian headquarters at Southbank. The two libraries are now embracing digital technology and enhancing the ABC's leadership role in quality broadcasting.

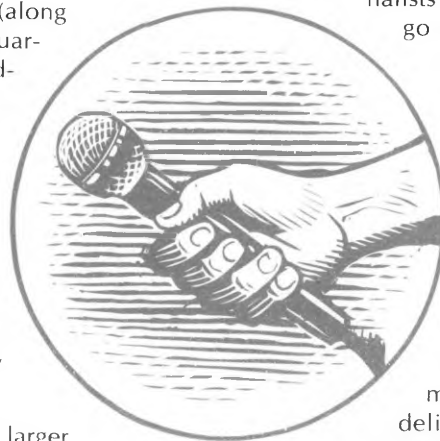
Both libraries are part of a larger ABC Radio department, called Program and Information Resources (PAIR). PAIR also incorporates ABC Radio Archives (Ultimo), six staffed sound libraries (one in each state capital city) and radio tape sales.

PAIR services are provided to all ABC Radio networks, Radio National, Triple J, metropolitan and regional stations, News Radio and ABC Classic FM. Radio Australia, Corporate Services, Enterprises and Concerts (including all state symphony orchestra) also take advantage of the services from the PAIR facilities.

The reference libraries primarily service program makers in radio and television, providing information to other areas of the ABC as required. Reference library staff often work closely with researchers in the various ABC Radio networks on program material. Work for Radio National usually involves research for documentaries and/or interviews where biographical material is of prime importance.

Metropolitan stations in each capital city, such as 2BL in Sydney and 3LO in Melbourne, use the reference libraries to assist the development of programming where there is a predominance of interviews. In these cases, a lot of background material is needed to support the program content and enhance the knowledge of producers and presenters.

The reference libraries also support ABC program makers, presenters and journalists in other capital cities and overseas by delivering information by e-mail, fax and telephone. The very nature of the broadcast process often demands that questions by presenters or journalists who are about to go on air, receive swift answers.



Online research using a range of databases and Internet resources are offered, with costs being charged to program departments. Document delivery including UnCover services is also charged to departments. One half of the staff costs incurred by the reference library in Ultimo are paid by ABC Television. ABC Television sees the service as complementing other services from TV News and Current Affairs at the ABC's Sydney television studio at Gore Hill.

The Ultimo loan collection of 40 000 volumes is rich in Australian literature, history and social history. The large reference collection relates mostly to arts and the performing arts.

There has recently been a shift to develop the collection by purchase of CD-ROM rather than hard copy. The technological advantages of CD-ROM are the main reason for this decision, with lack of space coming a close second.

The Southbank facility — a combined sound library/reference library — has a smaller, complementary collection of 20 000 volumes. Until recently the two reference libraries were separately developed. Rationalisations in both collection development and technology is bringing the libraries closer together.

## Sound libraries

PAIR also includes six substantial sound libraries linked by a database of 1 098 076 data records including details on about 140 000 albums and 800 000 individual tracks. Program makers across Australia

have access to this database to assist them in the broadcast process. The

sound libraries catalogue and maintain a vast and growing collection of commercial and in-house CDs, LPs and singles covering all musical styles and eras.

### Radio archives

Radio archives selectively collects and preserves the broadcast output of ABC Radio. One office, located in Sydney, serves all ABC networks across the country. The collection comprises approximately 41 000 hours of spoken word, drama and music on 57 000 sound carriers. These sound carriers include 1/4 inch analogue tape, recordable CD, DAT and Beta digital audio tape, as well as acetate, shellac and vinyl disks. They are stored in temperature and humidity controlled conditions in the ABC Ultimo Centre and at Australian Archives.

A significant element of Radio Archives, is audio restoration. State-of-the-art technology (the CEDAR System — Computer Enhanced Digital Audio Restoration) is used to preserve and restore valuable archive material stored on unstable carriers. Program makers also make use of CEDAR to assist with the production of their programs.

### Radio tape sales

Radio tape sales is one of ABC Radio's listener services which relates to and supports program output, on a cost recovery basis. Radio tapes provides a customised service, mastering and duplicating cas-



sette tapes as listeners request them. The majority of requests are for Radio National programs.

### Future developments

The major issue currently facing PAIR is the proposed digitisation of audio. Some steps have been taken in this direction at the ABC, but significant developments are expected in the near future. PAIR systems in reference and sound libraries, archives and tape sales, need to be developed to integrate with the new digital broadcast technology.

The first step in this process will be the integration of existing databases with an interface to digital resources. There is an identified need for systems to integrate with studio/digital audio systems such as program logs.

### New structures

The need for development has been recognised by radio management who recently strengthened the management of PAIR to reflect the need for planning and professional information management input.

The management team now consists of the PAIR national manager who has overall responsibility; the manager collection services with responsibility for coordinating the sound libraries, radio archives and the reference libraries; the coordinator technology and systems development with responsibility for all new technology assessment and development; and the services coordinator who has responsibility for radio tape sales and financial management.

John Bartholomaeus, ABC Radio

Gans (07) 3371 7500, fax (07) 3371 5566, e-mail [alfred@isa.com.au](mailto:alfred@isa.com.au).

6-8/3 Insearch/Knight Ridder Information Seminars. Introductory DIALOG (6/3) Beyond the Basics (7/3) Asia-Pacific Corporate Intelligence (8/3) Perth. Contact (02) 212 2867.

### National

• 1/2 Rural and isolated libraries' special interest group teleconference. 8am (WA), 9.30 (NT); 11am (NSW, Vic).

• 13/2 National School Section AGM. 8pm Eastern Summer Time by teleconference. Further details: Anne Plowman (w) (02) 569 7155, (h) (02) 747 1346, fax (02) 564 1083, or your States Schools Section committee. Contact by 10/2.

• 1-9/6 Third International Conference — Crimea 96. *Libraries and Associations in the Transient World: New Technologies and New Forms of Cooperation*. Foros Village, Republic of Crimea, Ukraine. Call for papers and/or registration form e-mail [Pourciau@cc.memphis.edu](mailto:Pourciau@cc.memphis.edu).

• 6-11/10 4th Biennial Conference. World Congress Centre. *Reading the future*. Convenor, Ms Helen Tait. Convention Network, Phone (03) 646 4122, Fax (03) 6467737.

• 21-23/1/1997 Information On line & On Disc Conference. ALIA Information Science Section. Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour. Ph Wael Foda (02) 332 4622, Fax (02) 332 4066.

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