

Port Phillip Library Service speaks the language of many

On 16 December 1997 the Port Phillip Library Service launched an innovative and exciting new addition to its worldwide website: Seamless LOTE InterNet Gateway (SLING).

The SLING project provides access to web information in a range of community languages through a single, integrated web page. A dedicated personal computer at the St Kilda Branch Library provides a unique Internet information tool for non-English-speaking library users.

The Port Phillip SLING project is the first of its kind in Victoria and was made possible by a grant from the Victorian state government's Office of Library Services. It provides direct access to Internet information in the following languages: Chinese (traditional and simplified scripts), French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Russian and Spanish. The library is also currently working towards Hebrew access.

The web page was designed to enable users of languages other than English to access web pages in their own language. Java applets launch instruction boxes for changing fonts and scripts to the user's chosen language when the mouse passes over any of the languages listed. It does not matter if



Richard Holt (centre) with City of Port Phillip mayor, Christine Haag, at the launch of SLING

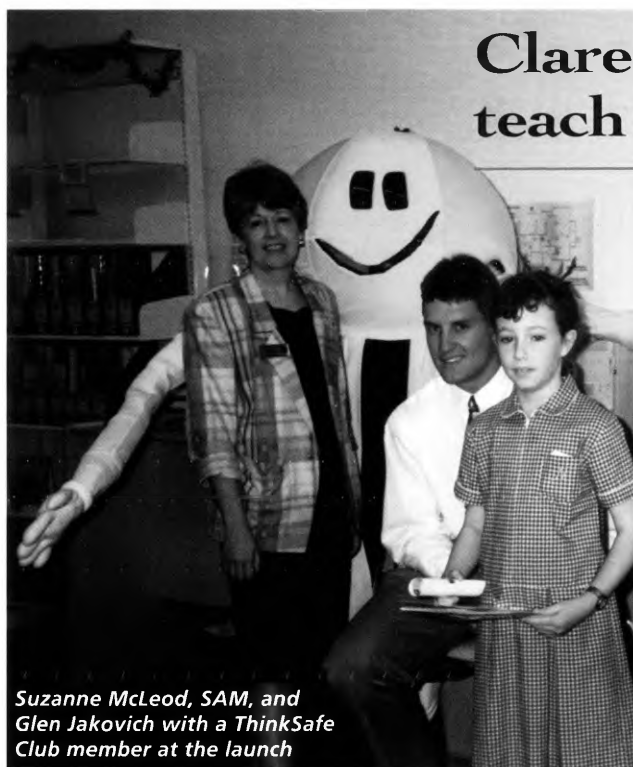
the last user was reading in Chinese, Russian or in English — the next user can easily switch to his or her preferred language with a few simple mouse clicks. Links to major overseas newspaper websites and other notable sites are maintained and updated regularly.

Online information is complemented by a simple, printed multilingual manual to encourage use by those who are not entirely comfortable with a fully-computerised format.

The SLING website is located at <http://www.vicnet.net.au/~ppls/sling/lotemain.htm>.

SLING was developed in-house by Port Phillip library's electronic services librarian Richard Holt, who has been responsible for the library's web page development.

In 1996 Richard received an ALIA Innovation Award for his creation of the Port Phillip Library homepage. ■



Suzanne McLeod, SAM, and Glen Jakovich with a ThinkSafe Club member at the launch

Claremont library helps to teach children about safety

In December 1997, WorkSafe Western Australia launched the ThinkSafe Club for Kids at the Town of Claremont Library and Information Service.

The ThinkSafe Club for Kids is an Internet program to help children up to twelve years of age learn about safety. On accessing the program, the children are greeted by Eagles footballer Glen Jakovich, and introduced to ThinkSafe SAM. They are then shown how to apply three simple safety steps at home, at school and on the roads: spot the hazard; assess the risk; make the change.

Commissioner for Occupational Safety and Health, Neil Bartholomaeus, said at the launch, 'It is important that we instil safety messages at an early age so that everyone in the community thinks about safety in all areas of their lives'.

Town of Claremont manager of library and information service, Suzanne McLeod, who also chairs the town council's occupational health and safety committee said that she was encouraged to see WorkSafe WA acknowledging the high profile of public libraries in the community. ■