

Shifting sands

ALIA DESIG conference, 5-6 December 1997

ACT

• **2/4 ACT Specials. Librarians' libations.** Come and network with colleagues at the Hotel Kurrajong, 5:30pm. (no, NOT the Hyatt this time). A great way to find out what is happening in the library community in Canberra. All welcome. Contact: Julie Philips, ph 02 620 85112, fx 02 6208 5149, j.philips@nma.gov.au

• **15/4 ACT Branch** The April meeting will commence with a short AGM. Section representatives are reminded that they should bring their annual report, if possible with copies for distribution.

• **23/4 ACT Specials.** Celebrate International Special Libraries Day in fine style. A full English breakfast at Regatta Point Restaurant, with an international guest speaker, at 7:15 for 7:30am. Cost: \$18, all welcome. Contact: David Bradley, ph 02 6266 4134, fx 02 6266 2666, David.Bradley@hr-m.b-m.defence.gov.au. RSVP by 16/4.

• **29/4 Canberra Online Users Group.** The annual Midas lunch. Sandra Oxley will talk about RMIT's work with databases held centrally on CD-ROM. 12:15 for 12:30pm, ANU, University House Common Room. \$22 (incl. drinks). RSVP: Jo Hooper, ph 02 6457 1230 or Margaret Hyland, ph 02 6205 8217.

NSW

• **1/4-1/12 NSW School Libraries section.** Committee meetings. Venue: Joint council rooms, Leichhardt Primary School, Cnr Norton and Marion Streets. Time: 6-8pm. Dates: 1/4, 4/5, 2/6, 5/8, 7/9, 13/10, 4/11, 1/12.

• **8/4 NSW TAFE section.** Carol Davies, ODEOPE: Equal Opportunity in Public Employment. The Little Snail French Restaurant, 133-135 Broadway, Ultimo. 6:30 for 7pm. \$35 members, \$45 non-members includes three course dinner. Contact: Dot Dawson, library manager, Blacktown College of TAFE, Main Street, Blacktown 2148, ph 02 9830 4572. Please make cheques payable to ALIA TAFE NSW Section.

• **16/4 NSW One Person Australian Libraries.** Networking lunch and discussion of useful internet sites. Parish Patience, Lvl 18, 55 Market Street, Sydney. 12pm, tea/coffee/sandwiches

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Delegates involved in distance education delivery met at the Wagga Wagga Campus of Charles Sturt University for a two-day conference on library service to distance education students. The richness of the participants' experience, coupled with the broad range speakers and topics meant that the conference was informative and provocative.

The conference theme was *Shifting sands*, which was interpreted as the double-edged sword of the increasing use of technologies to provide better service for our students. While on one hand, technology provides increased options and access to a wider range of resources, technology also increases access and equity problems for students and academic staff who are not equipped to handle this change in delivery.

Mark McFadden, director of the Centre of Excellence in Learning and Teaching at Charles Sturt University opened the conference with a stimulating paper on issues of communication, access and equity in on-line support for distance learners. He discussed our shift from objective to constructed knowledge, our society's transformation from industrial to knowledge-based, as well as technologically-mediated processes of communication and learning, and the changing college and university models.

Christine Cother and Andrea Rankin from the University of South Australia provided insights into the development of the new library service to Open Learning Australia; while Diana Harrison outlined how the Internet is used in distance education at RMIT and how library staff contributed to setting up the web-based communication infrastructure. A forum of academics from Charles Sturt University discussed the opportunities and challenges in on-line teaching and the support issues that relate to libraries; and Basseer Jeeawoddy outlined the problems for health science students. Ken Dillon, lecturer in teacher librarianship, spoke of the increased demands on the library with on-line learning.



Mark McFadden, delivering his keynote address

A proposed model of library support for distance education post-graduate research students was posed by Peter Macauley from Deakin University. The model incorporates the use of computer-mediated communication and utilises the advanced electronic and bibliographic skills librarians possess. A radical extension of library service was suggested whereby liaison librarians are appointed as official advisers on academic teams that undertake the supervision of higher degree-by-research students. A panel of students from a range of DE universities and NSW TAFE provided insights from the customer perspective.

Day two focussed heavily on technology and access and equity issues. Stephen Parnell, CSU Bathurst, reported on a research project in progress on an embryonic electronic delivery management system which embraces resource-based learning and distribution of the library workload across peaks of demand throughout the year. Further technology, communications, and training issues which arise from the delivery of electronic services were explored.

Judith Peacock from Queensland University of Technology (QUT) reflected on the implications for library user services which are evident in mixed-mode education by default.

The extreme difficulties faced by prison-based students was the topic of the information-sharing workshop introduced by Marty Burgess, Dean of Studies Riverina Institute of

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TAFE, and researcher in prison education. Marty focussed on challenging the delegates to advocate for prisoners' rights to access to library service and education. In response to his challenge ALIA is to be approached to update its guidelines on prison library services.

Federal and state government information and communications policies have not yet overcome the access problems for far-flung students. Innovative activities within the tertiary education sector include Curtin Learning Link and LISWeb which includes information literacy modules for students. Planning is currently underway to develop and supply specific web-based interactive information literacy products for students.

Lynne Vautier of the Curtin Business School spoke of the support for distance education business students at Curtin and provided some new approaches based on research at

Curtin which found a wide disparity in the level of access across different subject areas.

Kay Steel, customer services librarian from Monash focused on the restructuring of Monash Library. Absorbing a staff loss of ten per cent, the distance education service evaluated their activities and streamlined activities, and must consider possible changes to services and structures in 1998.

Margaret Macpherson, executive director of Charles Sturt University Library wrapped up the conference with thanks to all participants for their enthusiasm and generosity in sharing their experiences.

The conference was notable for the warm and enthusiastic spirit operating at all conference sessions and social functions.

Marion Bannister, Jennifer Vaughan, Beverley Broad, and Carol Mills

provided. Contact: Rosemary Blakener, NSW co-ordinator, ph 02 9888 9600, fx 02 9888 5821, blakener@bri.com.au

• 21/4 NSW Branch council meeting State Library of NSW, Sumitomo Room, Lvl 11, Macquarie Street, Sydney, 6pm. Observers welcome. Contact: Joanne Fuller, ph 02 9906 6000, fx 02 9906 5987, jojo1@ozemail.com.au

22/4, 29/4 & 6/5 Introduction to book indexing. UNSW, School of Information, Library and Archive Studies. Contact: Maureen Henninger, ph 02 9385 3589, fx 02 9385 3430, M.Henninger@unsw.edu.au

• 23/4 NSW Special Libraries section. International special librarian's day breakfast. Hyde Park Barracks Caf , 7:30am. Cost: \$15. Contact: Sharron Stapleton, ph 02 9318 5963, fx 02 9699 8067. RSVP by 20/3.

• 29/4 NSW Special Libraries section. *Librarian's libations and networking.* Everyone welcome! Join us at the George Street Bar, Regent Hotel, George Street, Sydney, 5:30pm onwards. Contact: Yasna Palaysa, ph 02 9228 5107. No need to RSVP.

• 5/5 NSW Branch. Executive meeting with NSW Minister for Information Technology, Kim Yeadon. The Treasury, Hotel Inter-Continental Sydney, 117 Macquarie Street, Sydney. Cost: \$30. Contact: Joanne Fuller, ph 02 9906 6000, fx 02 9906 5987, jojo1@ozemail.com.au. This Australian Library Week activity is proudly sponsored by EBSCO Australia. RSVP and prepayment essential.

• 7/5 NSW Special Libraries section. SOCOG library visit at their new premises, 235 Jones Street, Broadway, (formerly the Fairfax Building). 5:30pm. RSVP: Elizabeth Drynan, ph 02 9880 9000, fx 02 9880 9001, olc@pnc.com.au

13/5 Computer-aided indexing. UNSW, School of Information, Library and Archive Studies. Contact: Maureen Henninger, ph 02 9385 3589, fx 02 9385 3430, M.Henninger@unsw.edu.au

• 16/5 NSW School Libraries section. Jamie McKenzie — IT consultant USA. Venue: Monte

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Ameritech acquires Dynix Australia

On 7 March 1998 Ameritech Library Services announced its acquisition of Dynix Australia, formerly a licensed distributor of ALS products. The more than 500 Dynix Australia libraries in Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, Thailand, Guam, Saipan, Macau, Korea, China, Japan and Indonesia will now be part of the Ameritech Library Services global system.

The new company, Ameritech Library Services Pty Ltd, will be based in Adelaide, South Australia and will be the sixth international office for Ameritech Library Services. Ross Welch, former director of finance in the Ameritech Provo, Utah office, has been named Australia's general manager. John Driscoll, Dynix Australia sales and marketing manager, said, 'We all feel this change will herald a new level of service and support for our customers as well as a new and more powerful voice for our well-organised and highly-valued user groups'. Chris Taylor, head of development says that this development will improve communication and input from the product development team in the United States of America, which will ensure a stronger product line.

Ameritech Library Services (www.amlibs.com) is the world leader in library automation systems with installations in more than 7000 client libraries worldwide. ALS recognises the library as the community information hub and its state-of-the-art systems connect libraries with users, other libraries, the worldwide web, productivity tools, support services and learning facilities. It is a subsidiary of Ameritech Corporation, one of the world's largest telecommunications companies serving millions of customers in forty countries. ■

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