

Mary Elizabeth Carey

1 February 1932 – 27 March 2000

Mary Carey, former deputy principal librarian at the State Library of Victoria and long-time member of ALIA, died suddenly at her home in Melbourne on Monday 27 March 2000.

Mary began her career at the State Library of Victoria in 1951 in the Technical Services Department, where she established the Acquisitions Section in the late 1950s. At the same time, she lectured in the Library Training School, then situated at the State Library, in acquisitions and cataloguing subjects. In 1960, she joined the staff of the Free Library Service Board, a statutory authority until 1966 when it became a division of the Library Council of Victoria. Her role with the Board was to provide policy advice to Government on the development and funding of public and state government libraries across the state. In this capacity, she travelled extensively throughout Victoria, providing consultancy and advisory services, especially at the local government level, on future directions for library development and promotion. She went on to manage what had by then become the Public Libraries Division from 1965 to 1967.

Government libraries were the next area to benefit enormously over five years from Mary's vision and drive in her role, from 1969 to 1974, as supervising librarian for all state government departments. She provided professional advice to the librarians under her management, and the number of libraries in government departments increased substantially during this time.

For ten years, from 1974 to 1984, Mary was deputy principal librarian at the State Library. It was in this period that she established and expertly managed the library's personnel function, recruiting all new staff in a sure and capable style. Mary is best remembered for the quality of the staff appointments she made and for the fairness of her dealings with them. She was later appointed manager, public affairs, a role in which she coordinated the State Library's promotional activities, including exhibitions, publications and sponsorship. She retired from the State Library in 1987 after a long and varied career spanning over thirty-six years.

Energetic as always, Mary soon began part-time work at Wesley College Library where she was responsible for the after-school Senior College Study Centre and for the periodicals section. She was among those who willingly donned a hard-hat to salvage and reinstate the College Library after the disastrous fire of 1989. Mary stood no nonsense from the students and they had a healthy respect for her, recognising that although she



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had a will of iron, she certainly had a heart of gold. She got on with young people exceptionally well, enjoyed their company and was always interested in their activities. Ever outspoken, she was a willing subject for an interview which made rather unlikely front page headlines in *Lion's raw*, the student newspaper, with 'Carey breaks her silence'. She was just as tongue in cheek as her interviewers and enjoyed her reputation as a 'cult figure' for the wearing of white gloves when reshelving books so as to protect her manicure. She retired after seven happy years at Wesley at the end of 1994.

Mary was a member of the Library Association of Australia, and subsequently of ALIA, throughout her career. She served on the Victorian Branch Council during a long period in the 1970s and her interest in all professional matters was in evidence in her participation at innumerable conferences over the years. This extended to a very active participation in the work of the Victorian Public Service Association where she fought strongly and successfully for the rights of librarians in a climate all too ready to ignore them.

Mary Carey has been described as a legend in her own lifetime, and this is not too fulsome a compliment to her vision, tenacity and ability. She was a prominent feature of the library landscape who will be long remembered.

Mary will be greatly missed by her sister, Geraldine, and her family, and by her many friends.

**Dianne Reilly, La Trobe librarian,
State Library of Victoria**



ney Union. Members \$215, non-members \$235. Contact: Mary Greenfield, ph 02 9422 2335, fx 02 9422 2417, mary.greenfield@butterworths.com.au

• **26/7 NSW Children & Youth Services section.** *Committee meeting* (everybody welcome). Parramatta City Library, 6pm. Contact: Sarah Steed, publicity officer, ph 02 9806 5159, fx 02 9806 5919, ssteed@parracity.nsw.gov.au

• **25/8 NSW School Libraries section.** *Book week celebrations.* Venue: tba. Contact: Ian McLean, ph 02 9886 7501 (w), ian.mclean@det.nsw.edu.au

QLD

• **2/5 Qld Library Technician section.** *Nomination close for the Library Technician of the Year (Recent Graduate).* The award is sponsored by ALIA Branch Council of Qld, QLS Pty Ltd and ALIA Library Technicians section Queensland. Information and nomination forms from: Elaine West, ph 07 3403 2550, e.west@uq.net.au

• **15/5 Qld OPAL SIG.** *Meeting & Kinetic information session.* Brisbane Catholic Education Centre, 243 Gladstone Road, Dutton Park. Meeting: 9:15–10:30am, Kinetic session: 10:30–12:00pm. Morning tea will be provided. *RSVP by 10/5 to:* Denise Cadman, ph 07 3840 0433, d.cadman@brie.catholic.edu.au

• **16/5 Qld Library Technician section.** *Library Technicians Day breakfast.* Celebrate at the Coffee Club, Boundary Street, West End, 7am. And/or drinks at the Gallery Bar, Conrad Hotel, (Old Executive Building), George Street, 5pm. Enquiries: Elaine West, ph 07 3403 2550, e.west@uq.net.au

19/5 Deception Bay Library is getting into the Olympic spirit with a *Mini Olympics sausage sizzle* combining with the Guides and Scouts and the families of the Bay. Deception Bay Library, Deception Bay Qld, 4:30–6:30pm. Enquiries: Ph 07 3293 0877, fx 07 3293 0877, ryand@caboolture.qld.gov.au

• **20/5 Qld Branch.** *North African Cooking — the ultimate networking opportunity and celebrate ALW 2000!* Cooking demonstration, lunch and take-home essential ingredients. Black Pearl Cooking School, Fortitude Valley, 10:30–2pm, \$45pp. Bookings essential, enquiries: Vicki McDonald, sposd@brisbane.qld.gov.au

• **26/5–29/9 Qld Public Libraries section.** *Committee meeting and seminar — all welcome.* Venue: tba, 5:30 for 6pm, refreshments provided. (26/5, 28/7, 29/9.) Contact: Robyn Gattera, minutes secretary, ph 07 3403 4104, fx 07 3403 9969, sbispo@brisbane.qld.gov.au

1/6 QUT Kinetic Web training. Conducted at QUT Library, Gardens Point Campus. Cost: \$90. Visit the Library homepage on www.lib.qut.edu.au for further details and to obtain an enrolment form.

8/6 QUT Kinetic Document Delivery Training. Conducted at QUT Library, Gardens Point Campus. Cost: \$195. Visit the Library homepage on www.lib.qut.edu.au for further details and to obtain an enrolment form.

• **6/6 Qld Library Technicians section.** *Annual dinner.* COTAH Skyline restaurant, Morningside Campus, Southbank Institute of TAFE, 6:30–10pm. \$30 ALIA members, \$35 non-members. Contact: Yvonne Brock, 2000 president, ph 07 3896 2229, yvonne.brock@acqs.qld.edu.au *RSVP by 23/5, \$10 deposit required.*

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