

# General Council Report

THE SECOND meeting of the General Council of the Association was held on 20/21 August in Adelaide prior to the commencement of LAA22. It was pleasing to see a large number of members observing proceedings. Many major issues were discussed throughout the course of the fifteen-hour meeting which had sixty-four items on the agenda.

It would be impossible to do justice to the 280-page agenda in a short report in *InCite*, therefore only the major issues will be covered – some have and will be reported separately in their own right. Branch secretaries and General Councillors receive copies of all General Council papers and minutes, if any member would like further information.

## Manpower Study

The manpower study undertaken on behalf of the Association by Vanessa Bourne, Michael Hill and Barrie Mitcheson was presented to Council. It was resolved that the manpower study be accepted by General Council, and that the LAA publish it and request the Publications Board to take urgent action to this end. There was lengthy discussion about the way the Association should disseminate the information and the implications of the results of the study for the profession in general. To this end, a number of resolutions were passed:

General Council resolved that

(i) a copy of the study be made available to each member of CALS (Committee of Australian Library Schools) for examination and comment;

(ii) comments be edited by Meg Cameron in order to be presented as a report to General Council (November meeting);

(iii) the Board of Education be asked to review as a matter of urgency the Association's present policy of combining professional recognition with academic qualifications;

(iv) a working party of three be formed on the assumption that an oversupply of professionally qualified librarians exists, to prepare a paper for the November meeting of Council, making recommendations on possible action;

(v) the Executive Committee determine the membership of the working party.

When published the availability of the report will be announced in *InCite*.

## Statement on Non-Discrimination

In 1981 General Council appointed a working group to review the LAA's policy *Statement on non-discrimination in the employment of library staff*. The working group presented a revised statement to Council. This was adopted and the previous statement rescinded. The new statement will be circulated as an insert to *InCite*.

## DOMSAT

Following correspondence with the convener and members of the DOMSAT Committee, Council resolved to disband the existing committee and establish a joint LAA/AACOBS Committee on Information Technology. At its meeting on 20 August AACOBS agreed to the disbanding of the DOMSAT Committee and the establishment of a joint committee. The new committee will combine the functions of the DOMSAT Committee and the AACOBS Working Party on Systems and Communications. The terms of reference are yet to be finalised.

## Standing Committee on Professional Issues

Council resolved to agree in principle to the establishment of a Standing Committee on

Professional Issues. The need for such a committee has been prompted by the recent displacement of senior members of the profession, and a range of other issues which require urgent and specific attention by the Association. Some of the issues would be of an industrial nature but outside the scope of the Industrial Officer's work. The Vice-President is preparing a detailed document, including terms of reference, for the November meeting of Council.

## LAA and Information Scientists

The General Secretary working with the ACT Group of the Futures Committee is to prepare a further paper on the implications for the LAA of embracing information scientists in a more formal sense.

## Committee to Monitor Library Standards

Council resolved to agree in principle to the establishment of a committee which is to monitor the need for and review of library standards. The committee is also to act as a clearinghouse for standards and guidelines, and form sub-groups to review standards relating to specific types of libraries as needed.

## Public Library Standards

The Public Libraries Section has begun revising the existing interim minimum standards for public libraries. General Council formally resolved to establish a working party to undertake revision of the public library standards. The Public Libraries Section has been asked to propose names for membership of the working party.

## Role of the Annual General Meeting

The question of the role of the AGM and whether resolutions passed at an AGM are binding on the Association, has been discussed for most of this year.

The many problems present in the legal position of resolutions passed at an AGM being binding on the Association have been outlined previously. As its meeting in April, Council passed a new By-law which was then distributed to all divisions for comment. Many responses were received, with most endorsing the proposed By-law, and a number suggesting amplification or amendments.

Council resolved to accept some amendments with the new By-law now reading –

'Subject to the control of the members and these By-laws, the government of the Association shall be entrusted to the General Council.

Decisions of the General Council shall be communicated to the respective divisions of the Association, and shall be binding on all members, provided that a decision of General Council shall be submitted to a plebiscite of all financial members of the Association by postal ballot if requested by (i) properly constituted meetings of two divisions of the Association within 90 days of receipt of the request; or (ii) a petition signed by 10 percent of the financial members of the Association within 90 days of receipt of the petition.

A request for a plebiscite shall be communicated to the President of the Association in writing, who shall upon receipt of such a request direct the Executive Director to submit such decision to a plebiscite of all financial members of the Association by postal ballot. The decision of a majority of members voting in such plebiscite shall be final.'

Council also passed three resolutions relating to procedural matters. Advice is being received from the solicitor on whether these should become By-laws or Regulations. The

resolutions are as follows:

1. General Council shall consider all resolutions passed at an AGM at its next meeting.
2. Decisions of General Council on such resolutions shall be advised to every individual member of the Association through publication in *InCite*.
3. In the event of any AGM resolutions being rejected by General Council, the published announcement in *InCite* shall include also a statement of members' rights to request a plebiscite of the full membership.

## LAA Vouchers

This was reported on page 1 of *InCite* No. 17

## Standing Committee on By-laws and Regulations

Council resolved that a Standing Committee on By-laws and Regulations be established to review and liaise on a continuing basis the By-laws and Regulations of the LAA to ensure clarity and internal consistency without the intention to change the Association and its structure. The Standing Committee is to consist of the General Secretary and two other persons appointed by General Council for a term of two years. A complete review of the By-laws and Regulations is to be undertaken and a report presented to Council at the end of six months.

## Legal Responsibilities of Librarians

General Council discussed the question of the legal responsibility of librarians in view of the October 1981 High Court decision in the case of *L. Shaddock and Associates v. The Council of the City of Parramatta*. This relates to the law of negligence as it relates to the provision of advice and information to members of the public. The High Court in the *Shaddock Case* has put beyond doubt the fact that government instrumentalities may be liable in damages for the economic loss sustained by persons who act on information or advice negligently given by officials of those instrumentalities. There is nothing new in the case except its extension to a municipal corporation.

One may take two positions regarding the implications for a librarian, one is the disclaimer position – all care taken . . . but no responsibility, or we accept that librarians *do* have a responsibility regarding the quality of information provided.

The matter was brought to Council's attention by Mr John Levett who was asked to carry out activities on all fronts to stimulate debate. The matter is also being referred to Branches who are to provide input to Mr Levett. A further paper is being prepared for Council.

## Freedom of Information

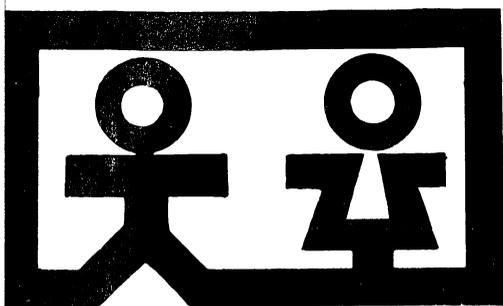
Concern was expressed by Council at the delay in the implementation of the Freedom of Information legislation. It was resolved to express our concern to the Attorney-General.

## Board of Education

Council resolved that the Bachelor of Arts (Librarianship) UG1 course and the Graduate Diploma in Librarianship PG1 course offered by the Department of Librarianship, Ballarat College of Advanced Education be recognised by the Association, subject to the normal reinspection procedures.

Under the existing By-laws the Board of Examiners consists of only those three

continued on page 5



## IN THE NEWS

### Interlending codes required

A letter from the IFLA Office for International Lending, c/o British Library Lending Divisions Boston Spa, Wetherby, West Yorkshire UK has been sent to the National Library.

Stemming from the IFLA/Unesco Congress on Universal Availability of Publications (UAP), held in Paris in May, it is a request for examples of existing international interlending codes.

The IFLA Section on Interlending is also looking at ways to assist countries in drawing up interlending manuals and asks that copies of manuals be sent to the IFLA Office.

The National Library has sent the following items in response to the request: *Australian Inter-library Loan Code*, National Library of Australia loan policy and responsibilities of borrowers, To Users of the Loan and Copy Service, Guide to Australian inter-library Loan Policies and Library Association of Australia Library Voucher System.

The National Library has asked for this request to be publicised in *InCite* so that Inter-library Loans' Librarians might forward to the IFLA Office copies of interlending codes or manuals used within their own libraries or networks.

### Royal Blind Society Talking Book of the Year Award

The winner of the 1982 Royal Blind Society Talking Book of the Year Award is a *A Million Wild Acres*, by Eric Rolls.

The award will be presented to Mr Rolls by Mr Harrison Bryan, Director-General of the National Library of Australia at a dinner at the Royal Blind Society Headquarters at Enfield, on Wednesday September 29, 1982.

*A Million Wild Acres* is a history of the Pilinga forests in central north NSW, and of the men who settled the area, pushing back the boundaries of the colony, ever in search of new pastures. Eric Rolls, a farmer as well as a writer, describes with warmth and understanding the land and the hard men who settled it, spicing his fascinating history with a wealth of personal anecdotes.

The Royal Blind Society, one of Australia's largest agencies for blind and visually impaired people, has recorded on cassette more than 2,000 books at its Enfield studios. These are now available to print handicapped people using public libraries as well as to clients of the Royal Blind Society.

The annual Talking Book of the Year Award is designed to highlight the importance of the talking books to their users and to recognise significant works of Australian literature.

Other books on the short lists for the award include *An Urge to Laugh* by Ross Campbell, *Nothing to Spare* by Jan Carter, *White Meat* by Peter Corris and *The Clairvoyant Goat* by Hal Porter, all of which are available both as talking books and in braille.

### Data base for relaxation and pleasure!

The first meeting of the ACHPIRST Advisory Committee meeting for the establishment of a data base on recreation, sport and tourism was held at the Footscray Institute of Technology Library on 1 July 1982.

Sixteen people from throughout Australia attended, including State departmental librarians concerned with sport & recreation, representatives from ACROD, Dept of Home Affairs and Environment, National Library, Confederation of Australian Sport, Phillip Institute of Technology and Australian Institute of Sport.

Discussion was constructive and extremely useful for continued development of the project to suit the end user.

Co-operation in terms of advice and document input was the key note of discussion. The trial file of AUSINET was reviewed. This is now available on a restricted basis as a QUE file.

The first hard copy index of the file will be produced at the beginning of 1983. The next meeting is to be held in Canberra at ACROD House on Monday 22 November. Gilles Chiasson, Manager of the SIRC data base run by the Coaching Association of Canada will attend.

### An invitation from the Gallery Club

The Galley Club extends an invitation to all those involved in the production, design and editing of books to apply for membership.

This independent Sydney-based association is dedicated to encouraging social and professional contacts within the book industry.

Monthly meetings are held at the High Club, Darlinghurst, and include an address by a guest speaker (mainly on topics related to the industry) and an opportunity for discussion before dinner (\$7 per head including wine).

The main purpose of the meeting is to keep members up to date with developments affecting book printing and publishing, and to stimulate free thinking and exchange of ideas among members.

continued from page 4

professional members of the Board of Education who are elected by the Professional Committee of General Council (By-law 24). The Board of Education has had two opportunities to consider the new arrangements and believes that the Board of Examiners is now too small.

Council resolved that By-law 24(2) be amended to:

'The three professional members of the Board of Education elected by the Professional Committee of General Council shall form the Board of Examiners together with those professional members of the Board of Education elected by the membership-at-large whom General Council appoints to the Board of Examiners'.

### Publication of list of LAA Officers

Council resolved to publish an annual listing of members of Council, committees of Council, Branch and Section officers as an insert in *InCite* no later than March of each year.

The next meeting is to be held in the Association's office on 26 and 27 November. A function to mark the opening of the new building will be held on the evening of the 26th.

Susan Acutt  
Executive Director

The 1982 Galley Club Committee is Rex Finch (President), Bryony Cosgrove (Secretary), Ian Hoyle (Treasurer), Judy Hungerford, Rhonda Black and Barry Smith (committee members).

Membership is open to any person involved in the production of books, whether freelance or with a company. Applications for membership are subject to the approval of the committee and can be obtained by writing to the Secretary, Bryony Cosgrove, 20 Avon Street, Glebe, NSW 2037. The annual subscription fee is \$15 which includes monthly newsletters.

Each year the Galley Club presents an award for the best produced books in different categories. A panel of judges from the printing industry assesses the quality of printing, colour separation, use of paper and binding.

In addition, the Galley Club holds residential weekend seminars from time to time, which have established themselves as valuable and authoritative surveys of developments in these industries.

### Year of the Tree display



This was part of the special display at Gosford City Library for Children's Book Week. This year's theme was 'Branch Out With Books' to link up with the Australian Year of the Tree.

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