

TIP-OFF: News from the Executive Director

On the 7 February there was a significant migration of Australian librarians across the Tasman, the occasion being the New Zealand Library Association (NZLA) annual conference held in Auckland from 9-12 February. Following a precedent set in Christchurch hospitality excelled, from the weather to the social events. Not to mention of course the intellectual content of a well-organised program.

The LAA was represented at the conference by Judith Baskin (President), Barrie Mitcheson (Vice-President) and myself. Scheduled with the conference was a meeting of the Joint LAA/NZLA Standing Committee. This Committee was established following the highly successful Christchurch conference, to discuss areas of common interest. A meeting was held in September, with the next to be at LAA22 where there will be a considerable contingent of New Zealanders.

Several of the many items on the agenda deserve special mention. Obviously, an area of joint interest relates to librarianship in the Pacific region. New Zealand was successful in gaining funding for librarians from Fiji, Tonga and Samoa to attend the NZLA conference. This is a practice the LAA should investigate further. The NZLA is circulating the LAA statement on Relations in the South West Pacific in the hope that they might adopt a similar policy.

The feasibility of initiating exchanges for staff in both association offices is being investigated. We have developed strengths in different areas, so this could provide some useful initiatives.

The NZLA and LAA are both writing to IFLA in an attempt to provide more input on IFLA committees from corresponding members. In some cases it might be more efficient to have a joint representative. The NZLA is interested in our proposed confer-

ence in 1988 being a joint LAA/NZLA/IFLA venture. As yet, however, logistical implications have not been fully defined.

Of course a major item for discussion was the joint LAA/NZLA Conference to be held in Brisbane in 1984. Helen Tait, Deputy Librarian, Canterbury Public Library has been named Convener of the New Zealand Committee. As such Helen will receive copies of all correspondence etc. to ensure that the communication lines are successfully kept open. The conference will have special reference to the Pacific and the Joint Committee is looking at the possibility of having a COMLA activity prior to or after the main conference. It is hoped that this would attract a wide range of librarians from Commonwealth countries.

From an LAA point of view it was interesting to notice the large number of members that attended the NZLA AGM held on one of the mornings of the conference. Also, the immaculate style and decorum with which the meeting proceeded. Shades of things to come perhaps!

In all respects it can be said that the five-day trip was very worthwhile. Ties with the NZLA are certainly growing closer - I hope we can offer the same hospitality at LAA22.

Susan Acutt
Executive Director

Latest news from IBBY

THE FOLLOWING BOOKS submitted by Australia will be awarded the 1982 Hans Christian Andersen Honour Diploma. Congratulations to Ruth Park *Playing Beatie Bow* (Thomas Nelson) for writing and Heather Philpott *The Rainforest Children* (OUP) for illustration. These prestigious awards are now known as The Little Nobel Prizes for Children's Literature.

There are, to date, 53 in the Australian delegation to the 18th IBBY Biennial Congress to be held in Britain at Cambridge University 6-10 September 1982. At the moment no more places are available.

The IBBY International Multicultural Collection of books mounted for the International Year of Disabled Persons is now in Australia. It will soon commence its journey around the country. It will go on display in Sydney from 29 March to 2 April at Overseas Telecommunications Headquarters, 32 Martin Place.

The launching of the IBBY publication *Able to Enjoy: Books and the Young Disabled* will take place at the close of the above exhibition at 6.00 pm at Overseas Telecommunications Headquarters. These are the proceedings of the conference held at the University of Sydney and organised by Australian IBBY for IYDP. The book will be launched by Professor John Ward, Vice-Chancellor and Principal, The University of Sydney.

To be launched at the same time is the *Bibliography of Books by Australian Authors in which Disabled Young People Play a Role*. The launchings will be followed by the Hans Christian Andersen Dinner to celebrate International Children's Book Day and the birthdate of the great master. (See *Happenings*).

The poster for the 1982 International Children's Book Day has been designed by the sponsoring nation Cyprus and the message written by the Cypriot writer Kika Pulcheriou. It comes in six languages. The poster and message may be purchased for \$5 (includes postage and packing).

The 1982 Australian Bookmark for International Children's Book Day is much simpler in form and therefore more suitable for children. It carries a charming illustration

by Pamela Allen, author and illustrator of *Mr Archimedes' Bath*. With each pack of 100 bookmarks comes an explanatory sheet for librarians and teachers. Cost is \$5 per pack of 100 bookmarks (includes postage and packing).

International IBBY has published a leporello *Bears of the World*. It consists of ten bears drawn in colour by some of the world's most famous illustrators including Maurice Sendak and Suikichi Akaba. Each frame measures 12 cm by 20 cm. It may be used as a frieze, mounted separately or used as greeting cards. It is available from Australian IBBY for \$9 (includes postage and packing).

All inquiries to IBBY Australia, PO Box 194, Edgecliff NSW 2027.

Monitor Group

AT THE GENERAL COUNCIL meeting in November 1981, Council appointed a small group to monitor developments in inter-library lending within Australia. For practical purposes, it was decided that the group should be based in one city, and current members of the group are Christine Crocker and Barbara Paton from the University of Queensland, Janice Rickards from Q.I.T., Ann Clarkson from M.I.M., Margaret Lynch from Queensland State Library and Pixie Crook from Brisbane C.A.E.

The group will meet frequently and will report regularly to members through *InCite*. Formal reports will be submitted to General Council meetings throughout the year.

The group will be establishing contacts with librarians all over Australia, but invite comments, suggestions or information from any interested member. They are particularly keen to hear of any developments you may know of, or have noticed in the current inter-lending system, and would also welcome information on any inter-library loans surveys, studies or special projects. Comments to Christine Crocker, Thatcher Library, University of Queensland, 4067; phone (07) 377 2410.

New office for LAA

It is with a certain amount of trepidation and also hidden excitement that I relate the following news to the members of the LAA. In the first issue of *InCite* for 1982 the present state of LAA accommodation was discussed. Since November last year when General Council ratified the decision to look for alternative accommodation, considerable time and effort has been spent looking at potential office space. Certain parameters were adopted in this search. Basically we were looking for something that will accommodate the future growth of the Association and in the interim surplus space would be leased to generate income.

On the 25 January, the Executive met. I had been able to identify two potential office blocks, one in Surry Hills, the other at Ultimo. Valuation and building reports were obtained on both buildings. After considerable discussion and inspection the Executive decided that an offer would be made for the purchase of a building at 376 Jones Street, Ultimo. The building is freestanding, consisting of two floors covering an area of approximately 8,000 sq. ft. I am happy to say that the vendor accepted our offer of \$235,000 and it is hoped that settlement will take place before the end of March 1982.

The LAA anticipates using the first floor for its own purposes. This area alone is almost twice that of our present accommodation, and will accommodate all staff, provide a meeting room/library and an area where members can view all of our publications in comfort. The bottom floor will be leased, although in the future it is anticipated that the LAA would use this, thus providing a seminar room suitable for the holding of General Council meetings and small seminars.

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FOND FAREWELL TO LESLE SYMES

AFTER A LONG ILLNESS Olga Lesle Symes, MBE, ALA, FLAA, died on Saturday, 30 January 1982.

There would be very few people in Australian librarianship who did not know Lesle, either personally or by reputation and there are many who were privileged to be counted among her friends. And those of us who were aware of her terminal illness and who kept in touch with her almost to the end could not but admire her fortitude in adversity. Lesle was a shining example of physical, professional and moral courage and integrity.

Lesle was born and educated in Sydney. She attended the University of Sydney and subsequently the University of New England and was one of the earliest students of the first Australian library school, conducted within the Public Library of New South Wales. In 1944 she obtained the Preliminary Certificate at the first examination conducted by the then Australian Institute of Librarians, the forerunner of the Library Association of Australia.

After several 'tours of duty' at the Public Library of New South Wales, the Newcastle Technical College and the Fisher Library, Lesle left librarianship when she married Frank Symes in 1951.

Between 1951 and 1958 Lesle had four children and very shortly after the birth of her youngest child returned to the fold as Chief Librarian, Email Technical Library and in 1961 she moved to Australian Consolidated Industries Ltd as officer-in-charge of their technical library and information service. Very soon she was designated manager – a rare and highly prized distinction for a librarian in industry, in those days.

In 1970 Lesle was awarded the honour of Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) and in August 1971 she was elected Fellow of the Library Association of Australia. In addition Lesle was an Associate of the Australian Society of Accountants and an Associate of the London College of Music.

Lesle retired from ACI in mid 1971 and formed her own company, Lesle Symes Information Services Pty Ltd, a consultancy firm which advised large organisations in the private and public sectors on organisational and operational aspects of library and information services.

Lesle made her name in the special libraries field. Apart from the ACI library, always

a Mecca for special librarians seeking advice or assistance, Lesle was instrumental in advancing the profession through organising, under the auspices of the Special Libraries Section, seminars of several days duration in which prominent overseas professionals took the leading roles. Lesle was one of the founders of LASIE which saw the light of day as Libraries Automation Group (LAG) at a seminar at Armidale in 1965.

Lesle served on the Special Libraries Section executive as President for several years and on the committee. She represented the Association at the ASLIB and AESIS conference in 1969. She served on the Council of the NSW branch of the Association and edited the branch newsletter, NB, in 1965. From 1967 to 1971 she represented special libraries on the Australian Advisory Council of Bibliographic Services and has been a member of the New South Wales Book Resources Committee.

While Lesle Symes did not publish extensively she frequently addressed meetings of librarians and non-librarians both in Australia and overseas.

Lesle was an early convert to automation in libraries and soon developed a well-deserved reputation in this field. She was of considerable assistance to the LAA Board of Examiners in developing the syllabus for the new subjects that covered data processing and information retrieval.

I began this sad task by describing Olga Lesle Symes, a wonderful human being and would now like to conclude on the same note. She will be missed by all of us and the profession will be the poorer for it. Our heart goes out to Frank and her family. *Vale* Lesle.

H. J. Zwillenberg

Director of Technology, 1975-80,
National Library of Australia

Chinese influence

MELBOURNE WRITER MORAG LOH is working on a project to record the contribution of Chinese immigrants to Australia.

During the nineteenth century, the Chinese were the largest non-Anglo-Saxon group of immigrants to Australia, but there is little documented evidence about them.

She has been given a grant by the Australia-China council for the project which will take about five years. She will be taping family histories, especially with older Chinese people who can remember back to the turn of the century.

When complete, the information will be stored in a special archive at the State Library of Victoria. Morag Loh also hopes to write a book about the subject. She has already written six books, mainly about groups of people who have been largely overlooked in history, such as women, children and immigrants.

Anyone with material or information of interest should ring Morag Loh (03) 21 1570. She is prepared to travel to country districts to collect material and tape interviews.

Student Grants

THE LAA SCHOOL LIBRARIES SECTION, Victorian Division seeks applications from student members of the LAA for study grants of up to \$100 to assist original research studies related to school librarianship.

Applicants must be financial members of the LAA, engaged in research in some aspect of school librarianship at a recognised Victorian tertiary institution and their plan of study must be endorsed by their supervisor before application.

Criteria governing the selection of those papers to be assisted by the Committee of the School Libraries Section are: relevance to the Victorian scene, applicability and usefulness, size of the task involved, level of study and an accurate estimate of expenditure.

It is expected that these studies will be completed within the academic year of application. The grant will be given upon receipt of a notice from the supervisor that the work has been satisfactorily completed and upon receipt of a copy of the research paper.

Although the copyright of the completed studies is vested in the students themselves or with the institutions they attended, the Victorian Section of the LAA would retain first option for the publication of papers of successful applicants.

Students wishing to apply for a grant during 1982 should send full particulars, including evidence of membership to the LAA to: Mrs. Rosemary Graham, 39 Bordeaux Street, Doncaster, Vic. 3108.

Closing date is 30 June 1982, and all applicants will be notified of the results before 31 July 1982.

Spreading the Word

MILDURA REGIONAL LIBRARY SERVICE has recently initiated a special service.

Holidaymakers and other visitors to the area are invited to borrow books and read newspapers from around Australia. So far the response has been excellent; borrowers are asked only for some means of identification and their holiday and home addresses – and of course to return the books before they leave Mildura.

The Regional Library Service is also promoting historical interest in the area. Visitors can look at newspapers dating back to the establishment of the Australian Irrigation Colonies, and there are also a number of publications for sale concerning the River Boat Days and other aspects of local history.

Good home wanted

RIVERINA COMMUNITY LIBRARY SERVICE has received a donation of 350 books from the Riverina Lending Library, a subscription library which closed soon after the opening of the public library in Wagga.

They are mainly mysteries and westerns, published from the mid-1930s to the mid-1950s. They have jacket covers cut and glued to the inside cover and the early titles include the bookplates from the Riverina Lending Library.

A good home is wanted for the books. Would interested people please contact Marion Brown, Wagga City Library (069) 21 5244 or write c/- P.O. Box 20, Wagga Wagga, NSW 2650.

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Ultimo is a developing area of Sydney, the building being 2 kilometres from the GPO. It is close to NSW Institute of Technology and the University of Sydney. Parking should not be a problem for visiting members. At the moment we are engaged in getting an architect's report and approval from the Council to use the building for our particular purposes before contracts are exchanged. There are still many bridges to be crossed but we are optimistic. I shall keep you informed of progress.

Susan Acutt
Executive Director