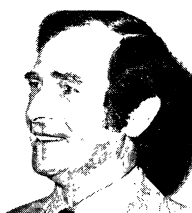


## A word from the President



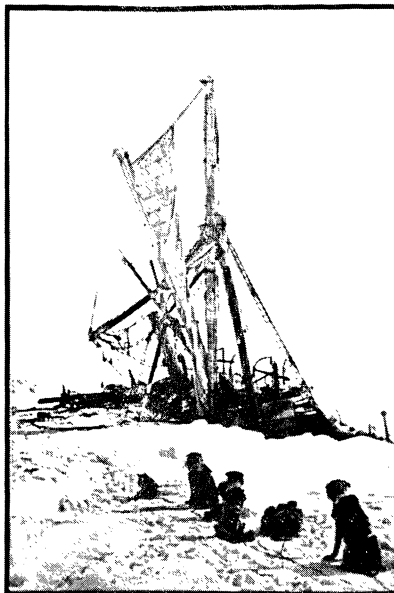
The recently formed AACOBS/LAA Joint Committee on Information Technology held its second meeting in Melbourne on June 24. This Committee is one of several groups operating within the LAA-AACOBS infrastructure concerned with developments that will be of importance to the information profession in the future. LAA committee members are Denis Richardson, Doreen Parker and Barrie Mitcheson with AACOBS being represented by Derek Fielding (Chairman) Louise Jones and Diana Killen. Susan Acutt is the Committee Secretary. To gain an adequate coverage of the range of technology applicable to libraries, portfolio responsibilities have been assigned to committee members. Brief reports on a specific portfolio will appear in *InCite* from time to time, the first of which from Doreen Parker appears in this issue.

In the last issue of *InCite* the Executive Director mentioned our visit to Mr Barry Jones, Minister for Science and Technology. On July 15 we will be meeting with Mr Barry Cohen, Minister for Home Affairs and the Environment to discuss a range of issues of concern to the LAA. We do not yet have dates for our meeting with the Ministers for Education and Communications but we hope that these will be in the near future.

The Futures Committee met in Melbourne on May 24 to plan a two-day seminar to be held in Sydney on August 6-7. Twenty-eight people the Committee feels have much to contribute on the subject of the future have been invited to participate on a 'pay your own way' basis. The convenor of the seminar will be Mr Peter Judge, who is the new chairman of the Futures Committee.

At its last meeting General Council confirmed its intention to host the 1988 IFLA Conference. There has been some natural concern about the problems of organising an international conference in conjunction with our Biennial Conference, especially when the latter coincides with the Bicentennial year in Sydney. The Executive Director

## The Frozen South



**The *Endurance* caught in the ice — photograph by Frank Hurley. This is part of an exhibition entitled ANTARCTICA, which will be at the State Library until September.**

**The *Endurance* arrived at South Georgia in November, 1914. In late 1914 the party was within sight of Prinz Leopold Land. The *Endurance* was caught in the ice during February, 1915, and, after drifting slowly northwards, was crushed.**

**The expedition camped on an ice floe which drifted towards Elephant Island, in the South Shetland Islands. In life-boats from the *Endurance*, the party made Elephant Island on 15 April, 1916.**

has already booked the major venues and accommodation facilities and has investigated the simultaneous translation services that will be necessary for a conference of this nature. The Executive believes that the planning workload can be spread throughout branches with many more people involved that would normally be the case for a biennial conference. This would lighten the workload and give more members the opportunity to participate in the planning of an international conference.

The next General Council meeting will be held in Melbourne on July 22 and 23. This will give members of the Victorian Branch an opportunity to meet members of General Council and observe their Council in operation.

## Balancing the manpower equation

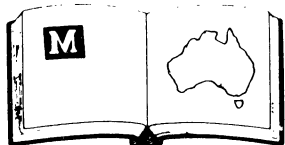
I am pleased that my letter on the apparent imbalance between supply of and demand for librarians (*InCite*, v. 4 no. 7) has provoked debate (v. 4 nos. 11 & 12). Obviously the matter is complex, and it is unlikely that the equation will ever be in balance. My point was that it now appears to be out of balance to an unacceptable degree, and that, as the principal factor on the supply side, the library schools appear to have done little or nothing to help restore equilibrium.

Regrettably, I must comment that Mr Ramsden (v. 4 no. 11) does me an injustice by suggesting that my hands are not clean on the manpower issue. He suggests it is improper for me now to regret the situation because, when Chairman of the Board of Education, I argued that the size and number of library schools was not a matter which the Board should consider when assessing schools for recognition. I still hold that view; if a school meets the Association's educational standards it must be granted recognition.

There is a difference between the Board's responsibilities (which are to do with educational quality) and those of the Association as a whole (which relate to the quality of the profession and its services, and to the well-being of its members). It is the Association, not the Board of Education, which should be working to bring the manpower equation into better balance, and the evidence suggests that prompt and decisive action is necessary. The Library Workforce Standing Committee deserves our support, and I hope it will achieve something, but I fear that it may take too long to get to that point.

The Association was commendably prompt in discussing information policy with the new Minister for Science and Technology. I hope it is not too much to expect that equally prompt discussions be held with governments, higher education authorities, and college and university administrators with a view to bringing the supply of librarians somewhat more in line with demand than presently seems to be the case.

*Neil A. Radford*  
University Librarian  
University of Sydney



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