



Keep the 'Vital' in your Vital Link

Listed below are changes in addresses and new telephone numbers for the *Vital Link* — Keep your copy vital by noting down the changes now.

- **LAA Past President**, Peter Dawe, can now be reached at 42 View Street, Mont Albert VIC 3127 (03) 898 2418.

- **LAA General Treasurer**, Alex Cutts, has changed his postal address to c/- State RMC for TAFE, PO Box 3, South Brisbane Qld 4101.

- **Northern Areas Regional Group (TAS)**, President's (Robyn McKenzie) phone number (003) 44 9866.

- **North West Regional Group (WA)**, New office bearers are:

President: Mr Paul Vandermade, c/- Hedland College Library, PMB 1, South Hedland (091) 72 2144.

Secretary: Ms Lee-Anne Shields, c/- The Library, Mt Newman Mining Company Ltd, PO Box 231, Port Hedland WA 6721 (091) 73 6591.

Treasurer: Mrs Janine Boyle, c/- South Hedland Public Library, PO Box 2361, South Hedland WA 6722 (091) 72 1542.

- **Education for Librarianship Section (NSW Group)**. Office bearers for this new group are the same as for the National Section — James Henri, *President*; Gary Gorman, *Secretary*; Marsha Reilly, *Treasurer*.

- **Literacy Section**: new office bearers are: *President*: Ms Sophie Athan, c/- Northcote City Library, 32-38 Separation Street, Northcote VIC 3070 (03) 481 9425.

Secretary: Ms Eve Stocker, c/- Northcote City Library, 32-38 Separation Street, Northcote VIC 3070 (03) 481 9425.

Treasurer: Mr George Eraclides, c/- Northcote City Library, 32-38 Separation Street, Northcote VIC 3070 (03) 481 425.

- **Local Studies Section, SA Group** (new group):

President: Ms Ruth Grgurich, c/- Noarlunga Public Library, PO Box 411, Noarlunga Centre SA 5168 (08) 384 0510.

Secretary: Ms Jo Ryan, c/- Enfield Public Library, Kensington Crescent, Enfield SA 5085 (08) 349 5370

Treasurer: Ms Gillian Pearson, c/- Munno Para Public Library, Warooka Crescent, Smithfield SA 5114 (08) 254 6184.

- **School Libraries Section, (NSW Group)**

Secretary: Niki Kallenberger, has moved. Now at Library Services, 35 Mitchell Street, North Sydney NSW 2060 (02) 925 8154.

Treasurer: Robina Weir, c/- Wattle Park Teachers Centre, 424 Kensington Road, Wattle Park SA 5066 (08) 322 4555.

- **Special Libraries Section (National)**: *President*, Lynne Carmicheal, has moved. She can now be contacted c/- Australian Submarine Corporation, PO Box 2474, Adelaide SA 5001 (08) 348 7100.

Australian Special Libraries News

John Thawley, *Editor*, can now be contacted via Swinburne Library Information Technology Services, PO Box 218, Hawthorn VIC 3122 (03) 819 8231.

is developing a program which caters to the new generation in the Association.

In this regard, the NSW Branch looks forward to a positive reaction to the initiative of its younger members encouraging membership among those at the early stages of their careers. Come on, technicians, join the fun, support the Young Ones!

Mairead Browne,
NSW Branch President.

Standards vs diminishing budgets

Please, Mr President don't knock libraries before you check your facts. Alan Bundy (*InCite* 16 April 1988) raises the question of fines in public libraries and the need to provide better access for the public by opening on Saturday afternoons and Sundays. He is quite right that fines may cause negative feelings about the library service — but you must be realistic — at some point there needs to be some effective means of getting loans back — otherwise reserve systems will be ineffective. Unlike colleges or universities where students' exam results can be withheld etc. . . . the public library has no such means at its disposal.

The experience at Sutherland (over 1.5m loans per year) will illustrate my point. Adults are not fined until books are six weeks overdue. In an effort to save postage costs last year we cut out one of the two notices to users, prior to their receiving the 'final letter' which is followed by legal action. Despite a campaign over several months there was a large rise in the number of notices to be sent — people wait to get them, then return just before the fine is due.

OUTLOOK

Public libraries — the British Minister for the Arts and Libraries, Richard Luce, has announced funding for a study of performance measures for public libraries. The result of the study, to be completed by August, will be a manual which will provide a range of performance indicators from which local authorities (councils) can select and adapt those appropriate for local needs and situations.

Mr Luce has also presented a Green Paper titled 'Financing our public library services: four subjects for debate'. Although it states that local authorities would not have to introduce charges, it suggests services for which charges could be made or contracted out. It also attempts to define the basic service which would continue to be free. A summary of the Green Paper was issued as a supplement to the March 1988 issue of *Library Association Record*.

- Authors in the United States are still waiting for Congress to take action on Public Lending Right legislation. Bills which would enable PLR to be enacted were introduced in the 98th and 99th Congresses, but no action followed. The chief proponent has retired from Congress and no one else has taken up the issue. Countries which already have PLR programs are Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Israel, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom and West Germany. Belgium is likely to become the thirteenth country with PLR.

Networks — Four libraries in Colorado, all Dynix users, have received an LSCA grant to develop an online interface which will link them with seven library systems in the IRVING library network. When this link is

Costs of recovery and costs of replacement must be considered — it is unrealistic not to do so. I agree that methods of levying fines need examining. Sutherland's practice is reasonably generous — there is an extended loan period, and loans can be renewed (if not reserved). Without follow — up it would be impossible to trace users who leave addresses. Hopefully the above will supply some of the answers to Alan's question 'why fine at all'. I would be interested to hear about alternatives for a large service.

And now on to weekend opening of public libraries. It makes me mad to have the President of the LAA making comments such as 'It does not suffice to ring hands and blame Council reluctance' . . . On what state does he base his remarks? Not NSW where many Chief Librarians have battled for extended hours — it took us four years at Sutherland. Has the President considered what it is like trying to maintain reasonable standards of service on budgets diminishing in real terms, with staff ceilings and with local authorities affected by rate pegging and restrictions on loan raising, looking for anything on which charges can be made.

I'm all for stirring — I do some myself — but is it fair to focus on public libraries only when considering access at weekends? What about the TAFE libraries and college libraries whose hours are inadequate?

There are many factors affecting weekend opening — the major ones being current award conditions and abysmal funding.

Diana Oliver
Sutherland Shire Libraries
and Information Service.

complete, libraries using Dynix, CLSI, Eyring, Carl and Pueblo vendor systems will be able to communicate. There will be almost 4 million items in the combined systems.

- The Universities of Cambridge, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, London, Manchester and Oxford, which form the Consortium of University Research Libraries (CURL) have received a grant from the University Grants Committee to enable them to upgrade hardware and software in order to establish a Consortium database with a central joint index at the University of Manchester. The seven libraries are at different states of development for automation, but already more than 1.5 million records are in machine readable form. The database will eventually be accessible through the Joint Academic Network (JANET) which links computer installations in universities, polytechnics and other institutions in the United Kingdom.

Disasters — On 14 February the library of the Soviet National Academy of Sciences in Leningrad suffered a serious fire. The library was founded by Peter the Great with 1400 books in 1714 and the collection had grown to 17.5 million volumes. The Tsar's books survived the fire, but 400,000 volumes were destroyed, 3.6 million volumes were damaged by water, 10,000 volumes were affected by mould and 7.5 million volumes need some treatment. The fire burnt for 19 hours and 15,000 volunteers worked to clean up the aftermath.

Jennifer Redding

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