



## FOL groups

I read with interest Alan Bundy's comment on the Friends of Library groups (*InCite*, 4 March 1988). Our President has raised some important issues concerning FOL groups which should be investigated further.

In Victoria, 26 FOL groups are established, some being almost dormant while others are flourishing. The goals and purposes of these FOL groups vary, some being simply social groups while others are aggressively fighting a particular campaign.

Unlike our counterparts in the United States, few FOL groups in Victoria act as some great reservoir of unpaid labour, helping the library with the inevitable backlog of work, or overcoming some staffing crisis. Apart from assistance in fundraising and political lobbying, the great strength of FOL groups is surely, as noted previously, that 'great reservoir of goodwill' that exists towards the library by the majority of library patrons.

An obvious need exists for a co-ordinated approach to the formation, support and promotion of FOL groups throughout Australia. Both the LAA along with national and state Library Promotion Council's have a role to play, as a large reservoir of expertise and knowledge already exists in respect to FOL groups.

Hopefully we will find the Friends of Library groups high on the agenda at the 1990 biennial conference of the LAA.

*Daniel Ferguson*

Organiser,  
Library Promotion Committee of Victoria

## There's nothing new . . .

An article entitled 'The mechanics of sharing' (*InCite*, 19 February 1988, p.14) claims that the 'new computer data link between Sunshine-Melton Library Service and Melbourne's Western Institute has established Victoria's first shared library database between a public library service and an academic institution'.

In fact, Victoria's, if not Australia's first shared library database between a public library service and an academic institution was launched by the then State Librarian, Mr Warren Horton, at Preston College of TAFE on 6 December, 1982.

Preston City Library and Preston College of TAFE Library signed a joint venture agreement which not only shared direct access to each library's database, but also shared the costs of providing for all of Preston City Library's data processing requirements, faster and more cost effectively than would have been possible by separate computer installations.

Direct sharing commenced with a cataloguing module to enable immediate database searching, and was extended to integrate with circulation and acquisitions control in 1985, with a community information module added in 1986.

Sharing is based on the well known and respected AWA URICA library system, which many Australasian university, college, public and specialised libraries have selected for its technical superiority over other library systems available in the world.

Neighbouring La Trobe University Library,

Phillip Institute of Technology Library and Northcote City Library have AWA URICA computer systems, making it possible to link all major databases in the area when 5 two-way, two directional synchronous data transmission becomes cost effective for the group in the future.

Currently users at each end of the shared link can instantly search Preston City Library's database of 121,400 titles or Preston College of TAFE's database of 73,600 titles.

Searching displays bibliographic details, the date for return of items on loan, the date ordered for items before they arrive, copy and location details and similar information to maximise the efficiency of the search.

The reciprocal borrowing arrangements which have existed for some years between the two libraries are enhanced by the computerised catalogue link.

*Jan Stewart*

Deputy Librarian, Preston TAFE College

*Michael Kleinhenz*  
Preston City Library

## 1988 Study Grants Awarded

The LAA is pleased to announce that study grants for 1988 have been awarded to Linda Luther, Associate Librarian at the Levels Campus Library, South Australian Institute of Technology, and Margaret Robson, Regional Children's Librarian at Central Highlands Regional Library Service.



Linda has been awarded \$4,500 to examine the provision of an information service to a technology park. Linda will visit a number of institutes and universities in Britain and the USA associated with technology parks to study the working relationship between the library of an academic institution and the science park. To date available literature concentrates on the links between companies and academic staff, but does not comment on the role of the library. Linda's study should thus prove most valuable in this new information area in Australia.



Margaret will be exchanging jobs with the Regional Librarian from Fairfax County Library Service in Virginia, USA for 12 months beginning in May. An award of \$2,846 will enable Margaret to visit other libraries in the north east of the United States to study library services to pre-school (0-6) children. In particular, Margaret wishes to examine and discuss extension services offered to pre-schoolers, their parents and/or caregivers. Again, this is a specialised area not well documented in the literature, and Margaret is looking forward to bringing fresh ideas back to Australia to share with her colleagues.

Study grants are available to practising librarians in supervisory or middle management positions, or in charge of specialised library or information services, to undertake study programs on selected library/information issues, or problems of present and future relevance to the development and improvement of library and information services in Australia. Further details and application forms are available from the Association's office.

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

# MARIA GEMENIS AWARD

### for outstanding contribution to special librarianship

Nominations are called for the Maria Gemenis Award.

#### The award criteria are as follows:

The award will be made to a person who has made a significant contribution in the following areas —

- Willingness to share professional expertise.
- Breaking down the barriers of librarians in isolation.
- Successful promotion of the library/information service, achieving outstanding recognition from their parent organisation.

#### Rules of nomination:

1. Only members of the Library Association of Australia, Special Libraries Section NSW Group may be nominated.
2. No current member of the Special Libraries Section NSW Group Committee may be nominated.
3. Each nominee must have a proposer and a seconder, with the consent of the nominee.
4. The proposer and the seconder must submit a brief résumé, in writing, about the nominee and send it to the Maria Gemenis Award at the address which has been nominated in the Call for Nominations.
5. The decision of the Committee will be final and no correspondence will be entered into.
6. The presentation of the award will be reported in the September issue of *Australian Special Libraries News* (or nearest date after presentation) and will include a photograph and the résumé of the recipient.

Nominations close 30 May 1988.

Nomination forms are available from:

**The Secretary, Special Libraries Section NSW Group,**

**Attention: Sue Brockway, HOSPLAN, Private Mail Bag 5, Rozelle 2039, (02) 818 2902.**