



FEEDBACK

SA BRANCH

Profit or Perish seminar

A cold, wet and windy day marked the beginning of summer 1987/88 in Adelaide. Despite the unseasonal weather the 60 participants in the LAA/SACAE national seminar for business were enthusiastic in their approval of the proceedings.

The keynote speaker, Katie Blake, from Enterprise Information Management in Sydney, gave a thought-provoking paper on the role of information consultancies and libraries in providing services within their organisation, to other agencies or individuals. Her address looked at the ways in which information as a commodity can be sold and the arguments which can be used to convince others of its value. She also examined the problems involved in charging for information.

Ross Gregory, from CLIRS in Melbourne, Helen Culshaw and Shelley Wickes covered the development of CLIRS (Computerised Legal Information Retrieval System) and the use of online legal databases in Australia. It was concluded that, although there are problems with CLIRS, there has been a considerable contribution to legal research, for which CLIRS should be fully supported by Australian librarians.

After lunch the afternoon's proceedings were opened by another interstate speaker, Leigh Oldmeadow, from Monash University. His paper discussed the marketing of HITS

(Hargrave Information Technology Service), which is a fee-based information service established by the Hargrave Library in 1983. The information needs of its clients and the marketing of the service attracted the interest of the audience.

The next speaker, Lynne Carmichael, from Adelaide Brighton Cement Ltd, spoke about the Special Libraries Promotion Task Force in South Australia, which conducted an informal survey of businesses to investigate attitudes to information needs. The aim of the investigation was to establish future directions for recommendations concerning provision of information to commerce and industry. The paper examined the lessons learned and reflected on future directions for the Task Force.



Katie Blake with Leigh Oldmeadow (middle) and Geoff Swadling.

The final paper was jointly presented by Dr Robert and David Goodwin of the SACAE at Magill. An entertaining paper dealt with the need to obtain up-to-date financial information in order for business to profit and not perish. In recent times there has been a shift towards electronic means of obtaining information quickly. In Australia there is now a wide range of electronic services available. It is imperative that people in business are aware of what services are available and how their business can profitably benefit from them. The paper considered some of the services available in Australia with particular reference to videotex services such as Elderlink and Viatel.

Thanks go to all the speakers involved in making the seminar possible.

Geoff Swadling
Seminar Convener

VICTORIAN BRANCH

Annual General Meeting

The AGM of the Branch was held in Queen's Hall at the State Library of Victoria on 23 March. Just over 60 members and two guests, Professor Jean Whyte AO, and Catherine Reilly, a visiting British bibliographer, were present to hear Ann Forbes outline the activities of the past year in her President's Report, and then hand over the chair to the 1988 Branch President, Bruce Davidson. Bruce was able to report on a meeting with the Minister for the Arts, Ian Cathie, that very morning. Mr Cathie assured the delegation that met him that work on the State Library should start by August and be completed in 5 years. He also stated categorically that the Public Records Office will not be housed in the building with the library. The new Library Board legislation is to be tabled in the current session of Parliament and it should take effect by July or August this year. Mr Cathie also requested that the Branch consult with him on the matter of joint-use libraries in Victoria.

The guest speaker for the evening was the new Publications Manager for Penguin Books, Susan Ryan. Her topic was 'Publishing and writing in Australia in the future'. Ms Ryan spoke about the healthy state of the publishing industry in Australia and she put this down to a number of factors such as the growth of multiculturalism and other recent social changes which have all been good for the book trade. Australians purchase more books and have access to more bookshops than other major English-speaking countries. Moreover the number of authors is increasing and more of them are making at least a portion of their living from their writing. Film and television tie-ins have boosted sales and word processors have improved the quality of manuscripts.

Susan rounded out her talk with some reminiscences of libraries she had used, ranging from the few books the nuns kept at the back of the primary school classroom, to the bookmobile run by the Randwick Public Library and eventually the hallowed halls of Fisher Library at the University of Sydney.

Ray Price

INFORMATION SCIENCE SECTION — SA GROUP

CD-ROM: putting the pieces together

The nuts and bolts of setting up for CD-ROM were the focus of a seminar held on 16 March by the Information Science Section, SA Group. About 40 people attended the session, the inaugural event for the SA Group.

The seminar was devoted to the 'how to' of CD-ROM and the decisions to be made before purchasing a system. Aspects discussed included the availability and compatibility of various pieces of hardware and software, technical requirements of CD technology and some of the common mistakes and pitfalls encountered by CD-ROM users.

The discussion was led by Kim Jelbart of Australian Laser Disk Information Systems (ALDIS), with Bob Taylor of the Department of Defence and Kevin Griffin, State Library of South Australia.

The session complements the seminar arranged by the LAA South Australian Branch in June 1988.

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