

FEED

B A C K

Health Libraries Section

NSW Group

Industrial relations, etc.

In the last month the Section has held two successful sessions.

On 10 August, Damien Ridley gave an excellent presentation at the Department of Health on STN databases and how these can be used to supplement searches on Medline in providing health-related information.

On 29 August at the Medical Library, University of Sydney, the meeting concentrated on industrial relations for health science librarians. Kate Burnham and Anne Dougherty — respectively representing the Librarians'

and Archivists' and the Library Technicians' Branches of the Public Service Association — spoke about the industrial relations system in Australia and how it works, its implications for us all, and how we must work together to achieve professional benefits. The implications of new directions in library education were also raised. Frances Bluhdorn brought members up to date on developments in the long-sought-after Public Hospital Librarians' Award, and stressed the need for cooperation between hospital librarians. Lastly, Tom McKeon — ALIA's new Industrial Information Officer — spoke on his role in assisting us in industrial matters. Tom travelled by coach to attend the meeting (as there were no aeroplanes), and we are very grateful to him and the other contributors.

Applications are coming in for our 'award' to a member of the Section to attend the Biennial Conference in New Zealand in November. An announcement of the successful applicant is expected to be made shortly.

Linda Mulheron
President

Cataloguers' Section

NSW Group

Nominations

Nominations are invited for 1990 office-bearers. Members are urged to convey their nominations to ALIA head office as soon as possible. All expressions of interest will be welcomed.

An interesting morning was spent by 120 cataloguers at the DC20 Workshop on 14 July, with Kathryn Davis and Diana Dack as speakers, and Andrew Wells in the chair. Kathryn identified characteristics of the new Dewey and changes from previous editions; Diana reported on a conference she attended in New York late last year on the future of general classification systems and of classified subject retrieval in an automated environment. In addition, those present contributed many ideas in a final discussion on reclassification practices and policies.

In Cataloguing Australia, Vol. 15, No. 1, March 1989, there is an edited version of Diana's report to ALIA on the conference, and on the meeting of the Dewey Editorial Policy Committee which preceded it. In the same issue is

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the text of the Mollie Thomson Lecture delivered on 31 August, 1988, by Philip Bryant, Director of the Centre for Bibliographic Management, University of Bath.

Please watch *InCite* for the announcement of the next Mollie Thomson Lecture, which is to be held on the evening of Wednesday 18 October in the State Library of New South Wales. This lecture — on the subject of authority control in relation to ABN — will be delivered by Jan Gatenby.

If you would like to know more about the NSW Group, please contact Eugenie Greig (President) on (02) 819 6221 (h) or (02) 805 7542 (w).

School Libraries Section

WA Group

OLISS version 2.0

In 1986, the School Libraries Section (WA Group) set up a subcommittee to investigate and report on online information services and their present and potential use in schools. With such an unwieldy basis for a name, an acronym seemed called for, and so the OLISS Subcommittee came into existence. For almost 2 years, this Perth-based group carried out basic research and prepared draft documents for discussion by members.

In 1987, the Subcommittee's report, *Online information services for schools: implications for school libraries*, was published in book form by the School Libraries Section in association with WACAE. The first printing sold out almost immediately; and the second, within a year. Despite continued demand, the WA Group decided not to republish on the grounds that changes in education and in technology since mid 1987 had rendered some of the material in the publication out of date; indeed, the WA Group felt that the whole approach needed updating in the light of the changes going on.

As a result, the WA Group re-formed the OLISS Subcommittee in June 1989 to look at the possibility of either revising the 1987 book or producing a completely new publication. With some people from the original OLISS Subcommittee and some new members, the Subcommittee now comprises Ms Margaret Phillips (Wanneroo Senior High School), Ms Imogen Garner and Ms Linley Kemeny (WA Ministry of Education), Ms Sandra Naude (St Hilda's School, Perth), Ms Robyn Boyd (Mel Maria School, Perth) and Dr Anne Clyde (WACAE).

At their first meeting, on 17 August, the new Subcommittee decided to work

towards a completely new publication, covering information access technology in school libraries (including online information services, electronic bulletin boards and electronic mail, CD-ROM, and in-house systems). It is expected that the publication will emerge in late 1990.

Anne Clyde

Special Libraries Section

Victorian Group

Electronic information dissemination

On 12 April, the Section held its first meeting for 1989 at the Australian Bureau of Statistics Library. Vicki Nicholson, President, opened the meeting and introduced the 1989 Specials Committee to fifty-five librarians and information-related members.

Chris Libreri, from ABS, then gave a talk on methods of electronic information dissemination. Various CD-ROM packages were mentioned, with particular emphasis on the Bureau's statistics information package. Many thanks to Alana Knights, ABS Librarian, for arranging the successful meeting at such short notice.

Hitchhikers' workshop

On 14 June, the Committee organised a 1-day workshop directed by Margaret Findlay on library software evaluation: 'Hitchhikers guide to evaluation: software packages for special libraries'.

After an introduction to the basic concepts, participants were placed in groups and assigned a 'library'. Each group was then set the task of choosing a software package for their assigned special library. In reality, this is a difficult and time-consuming task. However, the structure provided by Margaret Findlay in the exercise gave the information needed to begin to analyse and determine a library's requirements and to work out a draft specification.

As participants were given a particular library to work with, this prevented them becoming too preoccupied with their own libraries, but gave them the opportunity to identify criteria that are important in software evaluation in the context of a particular setting. A 'trade exhibition' had been set up, comprising URICA, Ocelot, Datatrek, LOIS and CAIRS. Once they had identified the library's requirements, members of each group approached suppliers' representatives in order to see how the systems worked, investigate whether there were systems available

to match the library's requirements, determine implementation costs etc.

Reports were prepared and presented, setting out each group's findings and recommendations for software for their given libraries. Unknown to participants, some groups had been assigned the same 'library' and had proceeded in different directions in their recommendations. This demonstrated very effectively that there is no right or wrong answer as far as the selection of software is concerned. What is required is an informed decision about what is best for the library's needs.

The workshop was successful because the activities were designed to draw attention to the kinds of questions and decisions that librarians need to be considering when undertaking an automation project. All participants were given the opportunity to apply processes involved in software evaluation and selection and to discuss some of the wider issues of library automation.

As a follow-up, the Section will be holding another workshop session in October: 'Hitchhikers guide to implementation: installing your library software packages'.

URICA serials package

On 6 July, Kerri Carr, Manager of the State Transport Authority Technical Library, addressed a meeting in her library on 'The URICA serials package, as used by the STA Library'. Kerri outlined the features of the URICA serials module, the implementation of the module and a few problems encountered in fitting URICA into existing procedures of the Library. She urged her colleagues in special libraries to make their particular requirements known to the developers of automated library systems, arguing that, in the past, development of systems has often reflected the priorities of academic and large public libraries, and that it is up to librarians of special libraries to ensure that their own needs are met.

The meeting was followed by a demonstration of features of the system. The Section thanks Kerri for providing the opportunity for members to visit the Library. We intend to publish the transcript of her talk in *Australian special libraries* in the near future.

Information audit

On 15 August, a half-day seminar on 'The information audit' was held at the Telecom Theatre. Jacqueline Copley, a keynote speaker from the recent Special and Law Librarians' Conference in Adelaide and Manager of Information

Services for the Royal Bank of Canada in London, spoke on the reasons for, and processes of, auditing the information needs of organisations. Jacqueline pointed out that, whatever the size of an organisation, there is a need to link the supply of information to the goals of the organisation in order to concentrate resources effectively and to avoid the collection of irrelevant data. She emphasised that even small input using the audit method can bring significant results in the form of cost savings, reduction of duplication and waste, and improved decision making based on a lean, efficient information service.

Thanks are due to the organisers, and to Jacqueline, who had a full schedule during her brief stay.



▶ ACT Reference Library - from 3 ••

community were very vocal in their opposition to any of the proposals to delay or exclude from the redevelopment any of the previously indicated facilities. The Canberra Times strongly supported these sentiments through editorial copy.

The Executive Director, Sue Kosse, and Kerry Webb, the ACT General Councillor, made representations to Liberal MLA Gary Humphries, supporting the case for the inclusion of the ACT Reference Library in the redevelopment. The Executive Director made further representations to the Secretary of the Department of Industry and Development, Mr Jeff Townsend, in support of the Library. The local television Ten News then televised an interview with the Executive Director to further support the case for

the Library.

The results of these activities have been most encouraging, with the ACT Government reassuring the Canberra community that a new Library would be assured in the proposed redevelopment of the site.

However, the availability of adequate funds will be the main factor that will decide which parts of the cultural complex will be taken up or delayed. The case for the Library will need to be promoted constantly over the next few months to ensure that it remains part of the redevelopment, and is not delayed.

Argus & Age

The La Trobe University Library has incomplete sets of bound copies of the *Argus* dating from 1869-1949 and the *Age* dating from 1875 to 1949.

If any library is interested in acquiring any or all of these volumes, would they please contact: Helen Sweeny, Administrative Services Librarian, La Trobe University (Borchardt Library), Bundoora, Victoria, 3083. Phone: (03) 479 1934. Fax: (03) 471 0993.

While this material is free to the requesting library, recipients are requested to pay freight charges.

ALIAS, Volumes II - III

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