

Feedback

Riverina Regional Group

Last year was a quiet year for the Regional Group, but a large number of its members are associated with the preparation of the Second Biennial Conference of ALIA at Albury/Wodonga in 1992.

The Group held a 'meet your colleagues' social evening in April at Wagga Wagga TAFE Library. This had attendance from as far away as West Wyalong.

August was a busy month. We arranged an afternoon seminar on personal computers in libraries by Dr John Richardson, University of California at Los

Angeles, followed by drinks and a primate viewing of the H R Gallop Retrospective at the Wagga Wagga Regional Art Gallery, and dinner. 'Keeping Archives — a workshop' was a joint presentation of the NSW and Victorian Branches of the Australian Society of Archivist Incorporated, in conjunction with the Group. The workshop, held in Albury, was attended by 18 people from established or developing archives. And later in August Tom McKeon, Industrial Information Officer from ALIA Head Office, spoke to members about award restructuring. Tom also spoke about multiskilling and the setting of skill standards to make the professional status of librarians clear. Members who attended Tom's talk found it informative, and lively discussion followed over dinner.

Finally, in November the Group participated in the 1992 Conference Walkthrough and Joint Branch Council (ACT, NSW, and Victoria) meeting at Albury/Wodonga.

Eileen England
Secretary □

Special Libraries in Queensland 1990: A Directory

Special Libraries Section (Queensland Division) launched this new directory last November.

Judith Thompson was largely responsible for compiling the data from 249 special libraries, and creating the database which will enable future updating to be relatively painless. RAMWARE and Syd Wood and Company, Bookbinders, gave their sponsorship to assist with publishing costs and so made the directory possible.

The new edition has been improved with the addition of a keyword index

indicating subject specialities and a bright pink cover to make it easy to find. As so many Specials are now using INMAGIC software, the directory will also be available on disk upon request.

Copies are available from Lyn Bergstrum, Australian Workers' Union Library, GPO Box 88, Brisbane, Qld 4001. The price which includes postage is \$25 to ALIA members; \$30 to non-members. Make cheques out to Special Libraries Section (Queensland Division) and indicate whether hardcopy or disk is required. □

Canberra Online Users Group Annual Report for 1990

1990 has been another successful year continuing to attract new people and maintaining many who have attended frequently over the years. A number of people have twisted our arms to provide a forum for demonstrating their products. In turn we have done our share of arm twisting and received cooperation from some excellent speakers. Thanks are also due to CSIRO and the University of Canberra Library for allowing us use their facilities.

This year we provided ten after work events, one in work time, a full day seminar and a Midas luncheon.

Jean Geue, Margaret Saville and Joan Bruce continued as Convener, Secretary and Treasurer. Geraldine Triffett did a marvellous job in organising the seminar. Thanks are due to committee members for all their hard work and support during 1990.

Revising the mailing list brings to light the number of librarians who are not personal members of ALIA and the number of libraries that appear to lack personal or corporate membership. The Association is only as good as we make it.

Jean Geue □

Interacting with people with psychiatric disabilities

The LISPD Special Interest Group, NSW Section, recently heard Wendy Weir speak about interacting with people with psychiatric disabilities. Most interest centred on two issues: the need to sensitise staff to this group of library users and the development of appropriate responses to unusual behaviour.

Wendy suggested that psychiatric disability is another of the 'hidden' disabilities. She drew parallels between this and other disability groups, emphasising the importance of questioning the images, stereotypes and myths associated with psychiatric illness.

A person with a psychiatric disability is a person first, a person who may be more scared of library staff members than vice versa. Wendy believes that most difficulties arise when the person with the disability is treated so that it is obvious they are considered 'less than normal'.

When difficult situations arise in public areas such as libraries, Wendy's advice is simply to treat a person with a psychiatric disability as any other library user. Library policy should determine what is and is not acceptable behaviour and the policy should apply to all library users.

Information sheets 8 and 9 from the Mental Health Services Unit of the NSW Department of Health provide more practical tips (available from the Mental Health Services Unit, NSW Department of Health, McKell Building, Rawson Place, NSW 2000).

Some interesting issues arose from the discussion, including how people with Alzheimer's and other dementias fit into the spectrum of psychiatric disability and the need for their carers to have access to home library services.

Those attending left feeling that only the tip of the iceberg had been touched but nevertheless, a little more confident about dealing with this group of library users. All agreed on the need for further awareness-raising and training in the area.

Jennifer Berryman
NSW Convener

LISPD Special Interest Group □

ASSIG Awards Deadline extended

The deadline for submissions for the inaugural Australian Serials Special Interest Group (ASSIG) Awards has been extended from 28 February to 31 March 1991.

Further details about the Awards (advertised in *inCite* 1, 11 February) can be obtained from David Sinfield, University of Western Sydney, Nepean, on the telephone (047) 36 0338, or fax (047) 36 0480. □