

ALW at the top end and...

Colette McCool picks out some highlights from the NT festivities

BOOK LOVERS had the opportunity to select from a wide range of pre-loved books at the fifth annual Northern Territory Library Service (NTLS) book sale. As in previous years books were on sale for \$2 per kilogram. Money raised from the sale of books will be used to purchase additional bookstock for public and community libraries.

- The Minister for Local Government, Roger Vale, announced during Australian Library Week that the Northern Territory Government would provide funding for innovative public library projects. Under the special funding arrangements announced by the Minister, public libraries will be encouraged to develop new ideas about services and service delivery to clients and prospective clients.
- 'In the dark? Turn on to libraries', was the slogan chosen by Darwin Public Libraries to launch the telephone enquiry community information service. 60 people who

attended the launch at Casuarina Public Library were given copies of the libraries' attractive new posters and pamphlets. The occasion was also used to launch the reviewed edition of the Darwin Aged Services Directory and the Darwin Youth Services Directory. A Leisure and Heritage Guide recently produced by the libraries in cooperation with the Trust attracted much attention.

- NT Library Promotion Council held a successful Quiz Night on Friday 9 October at Casuarina Public Library to raise funds for further library promotional activities.
- Individual public libraries at Tennant Creek, Alice Springs, Jabiru, Katherine and Nightcliff conducted a range of activities, open days, a book repair workshop, storytelling, games and prizes, and an amnesty for the return of overdue books.
- Librarian-in-Training cadships in the Northern Territory Public Service were announced by the Public Service Commissioner. These will come into effect in 1993. ■

On country radio in South Australia

Di Booker tells how Library Week became airborne

THE ALIA SA BRANCH took a new direction to promote libraries during Australian Library Week. Previous ALW promotions have tended to concentrate on the urban areas of South Australia. A country radio station offered air-time, so the PEARS (Promotion, Education and Recruitment) subcommittee of the Branch decided to focus on the rural areas in 1992.

Stereo 1125 AM Radio 5MU covers almost all the rural areas of South Australia; as far north as Blanchetown on the Murray, the Barossa Valley, to Pinnaroo on the Victorian border, south to Kingston and the South Central Coastal areas.

The proposal from 5MU was for five 30-second spots and five 15-second spots at a cost of \$125. Consulting with public librarians resulted in the compilation of copy which emphasised the resources and services of 'your free local public library', highlighting children's services, community information, information for students and access through the public library to the

national network of library and information services.

The PEARS committee wondered how to publicise the activity to the many public libraries in the area. A news item on the PLAIN network stating that ALIA was funding this promotion was broadcast and PEARS went off to ALIA 92—little knowing the reaction that was to follow.

5MU was inundated with public librarians providing even more copy about specific local activities. The outcome was that the radio station provided fourteen 30-second commercial spots. More importantly, in addition to raising public awareness of the role of the public library the radio station was also made aware of the importance of the library in the local community. Free-air time is to be provided during Children's week and the regular breakfast show which 'shadows' a family each day is to include visits to the libraries.

ALIA has helped 5MU meet the goals of the corporate slogan 'Helping the community learn' and our goal to promote the local free public library on an ongoing basis. ■

...in Adelaide

Jan Gaebler reports

Q: WHAT HAS more branches than the Commonwealth Bank, employs more people than the armed forces, has more people passing through its doors than board Ansett, Australian and Qantas planes each year, and loans more books than the TAB places bets?

A: Our public library system.

ALIA Past President John Levett used these comparisons to refute the argument that public libraries are elite haunts of the upper middle class.

John was in Adelaide to deliver the Annual Institutes Dinner address at the Mortlock Library, on *Gaslights, horse manure and the clever country*. The dinner, sponsored by the Libraries Board of SA, was held on 9 October to combine with the annual ACLIS Library Week Lecture.

John dedicated his address to the late Sir Peter Crisp, longtime Chairman of the Tasmanian Library Board, and to all other lay people who have worked tirelessly for the cause of libraries. He concluded with the challenging statement that libraries are too important to be left to librarians—'It is the lay supporters of libraries who will most effectively articulate the purpose of any library to the broader community, and who will bring pressure to bear for funding and legislative support.'

John lamented librarians' moves to abandon the reforming and improving role of the public library in deference to an obsession with information and managerialism, ultimately at the expense of Australia's cultural and social infrastructure.

'The very word *book* has been expunged from the professional curriculum; information and management are the new gods, and in the process something has been lost,' he said.

'Public librarians should offer a unified national culture and ethos. Where is Australian culture to be found? What does it look like? Who and what shapes it? Who owns it? It ought to be found in books and other documents, on the shelves of the local public library. This is where we would expect it to be. Cleverness and competence are not to be detached from the confidence, skill, intelligence and humanity of the individual. You cannot educate a nation, you can only educate the individuals who choose to reside within it.'

John Levett was introduced by Mr Des Ross, the Chairman of The Libraries Board of South Australia, and a vote of thanks was given by the Director of the State Library of SA, Fran Awcock. ■