

Train Line



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1 992 WILL BE an exciting year for the ALIA National Training and Development program. It continues the process which began in 1990 with the Members' Survey of Needs and continued in 1991 through teleconferences with Branches and Regional Groups. With these and other input, the Training and Development Committee of the Board of Education has formulated a national program for 1992 that introduces the first two training packages and the T & D database.

Keeping up-to-date

As librarians and information workers, we are all too aware of the impact and unpredictability of technological developments in our work. On top of these uncertainties are the cultural and economic changes occurring in society as Australia positions itself in a global market.

No-one can doubt the need to keep up-to-date professionally. The hard question is how to do it. Our profession is spread throughout the country, in all but the smallest of settlements, and is predominantly female. In feminised professions it is common for workers to return to the workforce after some years' break; and for pay rates to be lower than for male-dominated professions.

These factors are important for Training and Development provision.

The T & D Committee has just teleconferenced once again with the Branches and with the Regional Groups. It was an inspiring experience: a celebration of the enthusiasm, dedication and creativity of so many ALIA members and groups. There is clearly a wealth of T & D initiative, activity and expertise available nationally. However, the distribution of these resources is a very different matter. Some members have the luxury of selecting from a range of T & D activities, while others have virtually no choice at all.

The T & D Committee has adopted as its first guiding principle that of **equity of access** by ALIA members to the national program. There are other considerations, such as quality, cost, comprehensiveness, specialisation, coherence and so on. The Committee has aimed at supplementing the Divisions' activities by developing T & D opportunities which will be available equally to all members, whether they live in a Sydney western suburb or the Kimberleys.

Assessment Module for Preserving Our Heritage

The first package is icing on the cake of NSW Branch's bicentennial project, *Preserving Our Heritage*, a kit which contained two videos and a text. The T & D Committee has produced an **Assessment Module** to accompany this kit.

The Assessment Module is a set of carefully-prepared questions which test your understanding of the information in the kit; it also gives you access to a tutor who will examine your written answers and give you guidance. You can work at your own speed. When you successfully complete the answers, demonstrating your mastery of the topic, you will be awarded an ALIA Training and Development Certificate. This certificate is documentary evidence to your employers of your increased professional expertise.

The Assessment Module has been prepared by Bruce Smith, an expert conservator at the Melbourne University's Library and Information Management Department. Bruce includes an up-to-date bibliography for further reading. The Module costs \$80 including postage, for ALIA members. This is in addition to the cost of the kit *Preserving Our Heritage* (\$175 for ALIA members). The kit and the Assessment Module are available separately or together from the ALIA National Office.

Automating a Small Library

This second training package has been prepared by Christine Goodacre and Kerry Webb, whose book *Microcomputers in Australian Libraries* is one of ALIA Press's all-time best-sellers. In *Automating a Small Library* they have used their expertise to create a really practical guide for librarians and others who have to automate a library with no previous training or experience (or who now feel themselves out-of-date). The text has been written to suit the distance education learning mode. The exercises are designed to develop familiarity and knowledge in a real-life Australian environment.

The T & D Committee aims to provide quality activities at the lowest possible price for members and this package is really good value for money. It costs, with the assessment, \$165 for ALIA members (\$210 for non-members) and is available from ALIA National Office. With a copy of *Microcomputers in Australian Libraries* the cost is \$193 (\$238 for non-members).

These packages are structured training and so may be eligible under the Training Guarantee Scheme—a great encouragement for employers to purchase the package for their staff.

Forthcoming—a new marketing package

A third package, *Marketing for Libraries*, is expected to be available in late 1992. It will cover all types of libraries and all levels of staff and responds to needs that many ALIA members have expressed.

For further information on any of the above, contact the Training and Development Officer at ALIA National Office.

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