

Australian folklore revealed

A new and delightful Companion from Oxford



Traditional musician, the late Charlie Bachelor of Bingara NSW, passed on his music to the Horton River Band at the National Folk Festival, Canberra, 1984 (Photo Kevin Bradley)

The latest offering from Oxford University Press is *The Oxford Companion to Australian Folklore* (ISBN 0 19 553057 8), and a delight-

ful companion it is. The editors Gwen-da Beed Davey and Graham Seal have impressive qualifications for their task and have blended erudition with popular appeal in masterly fashion. Davey has taught folklore studies, written two books on children's sayings and is a joint founder of the Australian Children's Folklore Collection now housed in the University of Melbourne Archives. Much of her research for this book was done as a Harold White Fellow at the National Library of Australia. Seal is joint founder of the journal *Australian Folklore*; he has

written articles and books on various aspects of folklore, history and culture, and currently teaches these subjects at Curtin University.

You can consult their book for information, dip into it for pleasure or read it as social history. 'Folklore' has been interpreted widely: the book covers slang and language, jokes and yarns, the games we have played as children and adults, our early heritage and our present ethnic, religious, regional, occupational and other diversities. A long article on 'Ethnic Folk Heritage' leads you to others on Chinese, German and Greek-Australian folklore. In this International Year of Indigenous People there is special relevance for us in extensive articles on Aboriginal Folklore, Aboriginal Folklore, the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and Koorie Languages.

The book is illustrated with a wealth of contemporary photographs and appendix. Great value at \$49.95 rrp. ■

Wider range of activities for Alison Crook

Working to expand the influence of librarians

State Librarian Alison Crook has found that since winning the prestigious 1993 Bulletin/Qantas Business Woman of the Year award, the pace of her professional life has gained even greater momentum with the new activities that have flowed from her success.

During the past year, she has been invited to join a number of influential boards and committees and has been in constant demand as a speaker.

She has become a director of Lend Lease Corporate Financial Services, a new company within the Lend Lease Group. Her background in philosophy influenced her acceptance in early 1992 of a directorship of The St James Ethics Centre, established in Sydney two years ago to bring a new focus on the subject of ethics in business and the professions.

Her background as an Australian Volunteer Abroad, plus publicity concerning her 1991 Business Review Weekly/Alcatel Business Leader of the Year for the Professions, led to her invitation to join the Board of the Overseas Service Bureau, which is responsible for selection and placement of Australian Volunteers Abroad.

Three more recent appointments have come about as a result of Alison's



Alison Crook

special interest in training and her recognised authority on methods of information delivery.

As a member of the Board of Governors of the University of Western Sydney she will participate in policy development for that organisation.

She was also invited to join the Board of the new Open Learning Agency of Australia Pty Ltd: a consortium established by a number of universities to contract with the Government to carry out its Open Learning initiative. The

Government's intention is that the initiative will 'increase flexibility and innovation in the provision of high quality tertiary education services; widen and facilitate access to tertiary education through provision of off-campus courses in a wide range of subjects... and build on the long experience, depth of expertise and extensive range of course offerings and infrastructure of distance education... the more recent success of the pilot Television Open Learning (TVOL) Project.' Since there are clearly huge implications for the library resources required to support such a project, she was very pleased to have the opportunity to be involved.

Dagmar Schmidmaier, Head of NSW TAFE's OTEN (Open Technical Education Network) has also invited her to join their Advisory Council, to help ensure that TAFE resource centres and other libraries work closely together to avoid duplication and to meet community needs.

Alison comments, 'The key thing that all these diverse commitments have in common is that they enable me to expand the influence of the Library and promote its core services and businesses into new areas.' ■