

Asian collections: future plans for Australia

Andrew Gosling reports on a meeting with important implications for relations in our region

The Second National Roundtable on Libraries and Asia took place on Thursday 18 March. The meeting was held at the National Library and was attended by over fifty participants representing every Australian state and territory.



Prof. Colin Mackerras (left) and George Miller share a moment's light relief during a break in the Roundtable.

Eric Wainwright (Deputy Director-General National Library), chaired the meeting, which reviewed progress since the First Roundtable in May 1991 and the joint ANU-NLA survey.

ALIA seeks an Executive Director

At its March 1993 meeting the General Council re-assessed its approach to seeking an Executive Director for the Association. It decided to re-convene the Executive Director Search Committee to reflect the current and future leadership of the Association.

The Search Committee therefore now comprises Jenny Cram (1993 ALIA President), Bill Linklater (1993 ALIA Vice President), Margaret Trask and Warren Horton. Margaret Trask

will chair the Committee. Council has also authorised the Committee to consider seeking the assistance of a professional recruitment service if necessary.

The immediate tasks of the Committee include establishing its term of reference; revising the job description, duty statement and selection criteria; and developing a timetable and budget for the consideration of the General Council. The revised job description and selection criteria form the basis of the

Keynote speakers included Professor Colin Mackerras, Key Centre for Asian Languages and Studies, Griffith University and President of the Asian Studies Association of Australia, and Mr Scott Lambert, Assistant Director, Language and Asian Studies Section, Department of Employment, Education and Training, both of whom spoke on their perceptions of Asian studies in Australia.

Speakers in the session on developments since the First Roundtable included George Miller of the ANU Library on his recommendations following the 1992 survey of Asian studies and collections; John Shipp, University Librarian, University of Wollongong with an academic librarian's perspective; and Jan Fullerton of NLA on the new position of NLA Regional Officer, Asia, which will be located in Jakarta.

Julia Trainor and Judith Pearce of NLA gave presentations on the changes in ABN regarding Asian materials; Michael Evans of the ANU Library on electronic information and Asian information services; Chooi-hon Ho of Monash University Library on the scope for cooperative collection development and Robyn Stokes of the International Development Program on a regional and international role for Australian libraries.

Prior to the Roundtable a questionnaire had been sent to participants seeking their views on major Asia-related issues for discussion at the meeting. Responses indicated five broad priority areas for consideration: Collection development; Regional/international role; Bibliographic control; Information services and Specialist staff. During the meeting discussion groups examined these topics and considered the resolutions of the First Roundtable as well as the recommendations of George Miller's recent report *Survey of trends in Asian studies and Asian collections in Australia* (George has summarised the findings of his report elsewhere in this issue of *inCite*).

The results of the groups' discussions were then considered by the Roundtable as a whole and recommendations formulated. These recommendations are being circulated for confirmation by the libraries concerned and will then be widely distributed.

Participants strongly favoured the continuation of the National Roundtable as a means of ensuring progress on Asia-related library matters in Australia, and it was agreed that the Third Roundtable should be held in eighteen months to two years time. ■

advertisement that appears in this issue of ALIAppointments.

In revising its approach, the General Council acknowledged the difficulty of the task, and re-affirmed its desire to seek the best person for the new position. It expressed its deep appreciation and gratitude to previous Committee members, John Levett and Bev Kirby, for their dedication to ensuring that the Association had the best talent available to fill its position of Executive Director. ■