Community website launched

Ltyentye Apurte community members (Santa Teresa, Northern Territory) at the launch of their website which they developed during training as part of the ALIA Indigenous Communities Online Project (OPAI) by Mary Mortimer and Cameron Goold. Santa Teresa is one of three Northern Territory communities to participate in the project. The Northern Territory Library Service is assisting ALIA with the project in the Northern Territory.

Taking the people of New South Wales into the information age

The State Library of New South Wales will co-ordinate NSW.net, an initiative that will take the people of New South Wales into the information age. NSW.net is a lead strategy in connect.net, the New South Wales Government's vision for a whole-of-government approach to information technology. NSW.net was launched by the Minister for Information Technology Kim Yeadon at Wollongong on 11 March 1998.

NSW.net is an electronic information network for councils and libraries. It offers unlimited Internet services, other online information services and a private networking and e-mail facility with a twenty-four hour help desk. The NSW.net project will allow all 100 central public libraries and their local authorities to connect to the Internet, and to each other.

The tyranny of distance is a harsh reality to many people in New South Wales. Much of the state is 'information poor' particularly in areas where electronic access to information is still relatively expensive. Only ten per cent of New South Wales homes currently have Internet access. Improved public and community access is a priority and local government authorities are playing a key part. The NSW.net project provides the necessary state-wide communications infrastructure to allow cost effective access and sharing of information at both a local government and community level.

In the future new services and content will be added to NSW.net such as documentary repository and exchange between councils, state government information, professional journals, subscription-based information services and local government directories.

Macquarie University has chosen NSW.net as the network to deliver its new educational venture, 'Accessible lifelong learning' — a virtual campus aimed at the whole community, from school students to mature learners.

The NSW.net project is co-ordinated by the State Library of New South Wales and has the active support of the Metropolitan and Country Public Libraries Associations. OzEmail is the Internet Service Provider and Southmark Solutions will install and commission the necessary hardware and software. ∎