

Reconciliation is not about classification

I was astonished and dismayed to read the letter 'A gesture towards reconciliation' in the July 1998 issue of *inCite*. My astonishment comes from people being upset by the use of the letters ABO as part of classification schemes used to organise the collections of various libraries. The abbreviation ABO is used for convenience, not as an insult or as a way of denigrating aborigines. Perhaps we need to remove JAP, WOP, POM and EWE (for our New Zealand friends) as well as ABO so we are not accused of being racist as well as non-conciliatory.

Reconciliation is not about classification schemes being 'politically correct' it is about collections providing a balanced variety of sources for clients to research aboriginal history and white settlement/invasion of Australia. It is about libraries being the conduit for this information to be made available to our clients.

Jane Edinger, Applecross, WA

Attractive, and a sense of humour...

Congratulations to the WA Branch for their initiative in producing such an eye-catching, cheeky and humorous calendar (*inCite* June 1998).

What a welcome change from a profession which takes itself far too seriously. It is a timely reminder that many librarians do have a good sense of humour, and also that many are ...well ...yes ...attractive.

The West Aussies have clearly thrown out a challenge which no doubt will be taken up by others. The South Australian talent scouts are already at work...

Bill Cations, Bedford park, SA

A new name?

A new name for ALIA was not an issue identified in the Memorandum of Understanding which underpins the process of building a new association. My memory of the first joint ALIA/ACLIS Council meeting in Adelaide was that it was in fact not to be an issue until after the winding-up of ACLIS had been completed. I may be wrong.

I believe it is still premature to be discussing what a new association might be called, but as the 'name' has been raised for discussion my view is that we have an existing name which is explicit and well-known.

'Australian' where we are; 'Library and Information' the sector in which we operate and which by implication

includes the institutions and the people; 'Association' which is what we are, an organisation of people (and the institutional membership is still driven by people) with a common purpose and having a formal structure (to quote the *Macquarie Dictionary*).

We do have to exercise some pragmatism as the dollar and opportunity costs of changing an organisation name are significant. Is the current name so bad to justify these costs?

Let's ask the membership.

Di Booker, Adelaide, SA

Better than ALIA?

- The organisation will be a voluntary association of individuals and of libraries — Association should be in its name;
- It is Australian — as an international identifier Australia or Australian should be in its name;
- It is essentially about libraries — libraries or library should be in its name;
- Information, in the broadest sense, is what libraries collect, conserve, organise and provide access to — information, preferably, should be in its name.

These four — Association,

Australia, Library, Information — are the key identifiers for the organisation, best conveyed for utility by an acronym. Is there a better one than ALIA?

Other names suggested in *inCite*, such as 'Libraries Australia', are more like marketing slogans which the organisation may indeed wish to adopt.

Before we reinvent the naming wheel which arrived at ALIA only about a decade ago, and as a representative of a long-standing ACLIS member, I suggest that a plebiscite of ACLIS members be held to assess whether a significant proportion of members do not favour ALIA as the name of the organisation. This would be far less costly than a plebiscite of all members of ALIA and ACLIS.

Alan Bundy, Adelaide, SA

Your voice

Your letters on any issue of relevance to the library and information sector are welcomed.

All letters should be addressed to the *inCite* editor and may be e-mailed to incite@alia.org.au, or faxed to 02 6282 2249, or posted to: Your voice, ALIA, PO Box E441, Kingston ACT 2604. Please include your name and postal address with your letter or e-mail.

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