



NEWS

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Australian Library and Information Association

5th biennial conference

Once every two years the nation's librarians meet for a conference — it is Adelaide's turn in 1998. About 1 000 librarians will be in Adelaide for the Biennial Conference of the Australian Library and Information Association.

Several members of the University Library staff have been involved with the planning and organisation for this conference; several will be presenting papers or chairing sessions at the main conference, or at one of several ancillary meetings.

The Library has produced copies of its *Guide to Adelaide's Antiquarian, Second-hand and Remainder Bookshops* for interested delegates. Also, as coordinator of the Australian Library Publishers' Society (ALPS), the Library has published the 4th edition of the *Catalogue of Members' Publications* which will also be distributed during the conference.

Our principal contribution will be hosting pre-dinner drinks on the evening of 27 October for delegates. The venue will be the Barr Smith Library's magnificent reading room, one of the architectural treasures of the city and the campus. Most visitors will not be familiar with the reading room, and this will be an opportunity to show off one of the University's and the city's architectural gems. For the occasion the eastern doors will be opened so that visitors may enter the Library from the lawns. We apologise in advance for any

inconvenience to users of the room, but we are sure that most members of the University community will be as pleased and proud as we are to show off the glories of the reading room.

The building was opened in 1932, and its classic Renaissance style was thought to be suitable to Adelaide's mediterranean climate. It was described at the time as 'palatial, beautiful, magnificent, imposing, ornate, splendid, etc'. One contemporary newspaper article regretted that it is 'far from the madding crowd, — for its beautiful architecture, of which there is little superior in Adelaide, will not be readily seen by the general public or interstate or overseas visitors.' The special opening in association with the Library conference will introduce it to several hundred of these interstate visitors, including some from overseas.

Ray Choate



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Bringing Europe to Australian libraries

The European Microform Sets Project: increasing access and utility by analytic cataloguing

In comparison to their European and North American counterparts, research libraries in Australia are few, and of comparatively recent origin. Building collections of older, foreign language, and out-of-print materials has of necessity been retrospective, less comprehensive, and frequently more expensive than is possible for older and overseas libraries.

To redress this situation, Australian research libraries have for approximately four decades been buying large sets of microform publications, which typically include many out-of-print titles no longer available in other formats. Some of these materials comprise items published as ephemera, others are conventional books, journals and newspapers which do not warrant republication in paper form but which, nevertheless, represent valuable research material.

While the majority of these sets are of interest to social scientists, historians, and researchers in literature and the humanities, the range is enormous, embracing most areas of scholarly interest. In general the contents of the collections are not individually catalogued, but rather are listed in a single paper list acquired with each microform set, and so knowledge of particular titles held in Australia is concealed from most researchers.

Five Australian university libraries, led by the University of Adelaide, have undertaken a project of cataloguing these individual publications within the microform sets, a process known as 'analytical' cataloguing. The catalogue records acquired and ordered so far have been purchased in machine-readable (i.e. electronic) form from organisations overseas. A later stage of the project will entail contracting for original cataloguing of important sets. The catalogue records acquired through the Project will be loaded to the Australian Bibliographic Network, and from there to the catalogues of the libraries which hold those sets.

The current project is focusing on microform sets in European studies, an area with a high degree of inconsistent and patchy bibliographic control, despite the large quantity of microform resources and the significant level of academic interest in this field. It is planned to undertake projects focussing on different areas in the future. To date approximately 120 000 catalogue records have been acquired and ordered for individual titles within 26 microform sets.

An important part of the Project is consultation with academic staff in participating Universities, as well as with fellows of the Australian Academy of the Humanities and of the Australian Academy of the Social Sciences. This consultation has given the Project valuable advice on identifying priorities between some 150 microform sets. Final decisions are made by representatives of the Project partner libraries.

Many may ask, 'Why all this fuss over microform? Won't CD-ROM and other technologies solve this matter?'. It is true that microform is a product of one stage in the history of information recording technology — were those sets to be published today, they would be in digital format and their catalogue details would be readily accessible. The commercial reality is that these microform sets are unlikely to be republished in any other format. The market for such resources is small and specialised, and libraries which have previously invested in microform have other priorities for future collection development.

Libraries involved in the Project are the Australian National University, the University of Melbourne, Monash University, and the University of Western Australia. Project management is by the University of Adelaide Library.

Ray Choate

Adelaide's Antiquarian, Second-hand and Remainder Bookshops: a guide



The Library has just published an updated version of this guide, valid to October 1998. Some thirty dealers, mostly in Adelaide, are listed. Copies are available from the University Librarian's Office, or it may be consulted on the Internet at:

http://www.library.adelaide.edu.au/ual/publ/antiq_book.html

Library Skills Online Tutorial Project

Over the past ten years the Barr Smith Library has run a program to teach information literacy skills to approximately 2 000 newly-enrolled students. This program uses a paper-based *Library Skills Workbook* in several subject-based versions. The *Workbook* is designed for self-study, and is completed by students between February and April. Workbooks have been produced for Arts, Science, Medicine, Dentistry, Economics, Management and Music students.

To enable the efficient use of library staff and resources, the Library undertook at the beginning of 1998 a specific project to develop a Web-based tutorial to deliver the information literacy skills program. Because of the Library's association with the Adelaide University Learning and Information Technology Project (AULIT), the Library decided to use the Science *Library Skills Workbook* as the basis for its project.

A consultant, Karen Horsfall from ASPECT Computing, was employed in January to manage the project, and a Steering Committee was established to provide input and advice. Between January and February 1998 Karen reviewed a number of Web-based course management software products and evaluated two products, TopClass and WebCT. Following the evaluation of these two products, WebCT was chosen to develop our Web-based version of the Science Workbook. Glenn Ball — also from ASPECT Computing — was employed to develop the tutorial, which was completed in August.

The Library Skills Online Tutorial is interactive. That is, it not only teaches the concepts of searching the catalogue, appropriate electronic databases, and the Internet, but also gives participants 'hands-on' live activities to reinforce those concepts.

At the end of each section of the Tutorial there are questions which users are required to answer to determine their understanding of the concepts. Answers are marked automatically by WebCT's Administrator and a Mark/Grade/Score is allocated. Grades can be downloaded in a delimited format and may be subsequently uploaded to other record systems such as the University's Student Information System.

Because it is Web-based the tutorial may be completed anywhere, provided that users have Netscape Navigator 4 or Microsoft Explorer 4 and access to WinSpirs; this will allow users the flexibility of where and when they complete the tutorial.

The Library is currently Beta testing the Science Library Skills Online Tutorial. Feedback from the Beta tests is very encouraging, and indicates that it is feasible to deliver information literacy skills over the Internet. A report with recommendations will be produced at the end of Beta testing. If these recommendations are accepted, a Pilot of the tutorial will be run for first year Science students in first Semester 1999.

Karen Horsfall

It is with much sadness that the Library reports the death in early September of Marie Robinson, our Collection Development and Research Librarian.

Marie joined the Library staff in 1960. Over the years she became known to many academics and worked closely with them to build on the excellent teaching and research collections of the University Library and to develop new collections in support of academic initiatives. Marie's breadth of interest, tireless energy, good memory, Irish wit and charm were legend, not only with her colleagues in the Library but throughout the University with those who knew her and worked on collection development with her. She was an invaluable adviser on the use of 'literary equipment' funds in their hey-day, and the impressive research collections, much of them in microform, are a result of her collaboration with academic colleagues.

They stand as a very substantial monument to her professional career.

The Australian Library Publishers' Society (ALPS)

The University Librarian is the convener of ALPS which was founded a decade ago to market the publications of several small library publishers, and to encourage publishing of this type in Australia. ALPS is linked with the International Group of Publishing Libraries, and through that affiliation we are able to make some contact with overseas markets.

The 4th edition of the *Catalogue of Members' Publications* has just been published and contains over 400 publications. The range of subjects is extensive.

Copies of the catalogue are available from the University Librarian's Office, or it may be consulted on the Internet at:

<http://library.adelaide.edu.au/ual/publ/alps>

French resources on the Web

University of Adelaide Research Librarian, Alan Keig, is a pioneer in establishing subject-specific Web pages for the Library's Web site, building comprehensive and easy-to-follow links for French, English, Philosophy and Linguistics.



His hard work has paid off! Alan's French site was recently commended in the Bulletin of the Australian Society for French Studies *Carnet Austral* as being an 'excellent site...[which] must rank as a field leader'. The author, Tim Unwin, Professor of French at the University of Liverpool, goes on to say: 'Just constructing a Web site is child's play: developing and maintaining a proper teaching and/or research base requires specialist expertise both in the discipline itself and in the technology'. Alan has proved he has both!

Alan's page was also ranked above France's Ministry of Culture homepage in Harley Hahn's *Internet and Web golden directory* (1997 edition), in a list of sources for information on the French language.

Visit Alan's French site at:

<http://www.library.adelaide.edu.au/guide/hum/french/>

Physics e-Print archive mirror

The University of Adelaide's Physics Department, the National Institute for Theoretical Physics, and the University of Adelaide Library have collaborated to establish a mirror server of the e-Print (pre-print) database at the Los Alamos National Laboratory. The mirror site is updated daily and is available at URL:

<<http://xxx.adelaide.edu.au>>

Its presence in Australia benefits local researchers by improved speed and reliability of access and delivery, and a reduction in cost of access.

Use statistics for the first year of operation indicate the popularity of the e-Print database with users in the Antipodes: from 4 July 1997 to 30 June 1998 there were 336 606 successful requests; over the past few months the daily average has been almost 2 000 requests a day. Of these, at least 65% originated in Australia and 43% were from Australian universities.

The University of Adelaide was the major user with 13.74% of the requests, probably due to local knowledge of the existence of the e-Print site. In total 21 Australian universities have used the site.

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