

Medical Libraries Section
Victorian Group
Newsletter

June 1984
#7



1984 programme

Meeting 3 : Thursday, July 12. Medical Library, Royal Children's Hospital,
"Computer applications in Libraries"
Part 2 : Evaluation of available systems

Meeting 4 : First week in October
Joint meeting with Public Libraries Section
"Delivery of medical information to the public"

Meeting 5 : First week in December
Annual General Meeting and Christmas Party

"Computer applications in Libraries" - Part 2. Evaluation of available systems

This meeting (July 12) is the second in a two part series. Those of you who were fortunate to attend the first session will be eagerly awaiting this second follow-on meeting.

This time round there will be two guest speakers who will lead the discussion, these being Mr. Keith Davison (Ballarat C.A.E.) and Mr. G. Dudley (State Library). The meeting is to be divided into two separate sessions as outlined in the accompanying notice giving details.

The first session: 'Available computer packages/systems' will be addressed by Mr. G. Dudley. Be ready with pen and paper to note those systems which may give you a lead in deciding the particular computer package best suited to your needs -if you're contemplating computerizing, of course! Even if you're not at this stage, it's still handy to be aware of just what's around.

The second session : 'Techniques for evaluating packages' will be addressed by Mr. Keith Davison. Again this is an area where it is essential to be fully cognizant with some form of criteria for the evaluation of computer packages for libraries. We look forward to listening to what Keith has to offer in this field - if last meeting's speech was anything to go by, then no one will be disappointed for this next session!

So come along! Even if you weren't able to make it to the last meeting, there is much to be gained from this second part on computer applications in libraries.

Wrap-up on last general meeting

Guest speaker, Mr. Keith Davison, addressed a number of issues during the meeting of May 8, 1984. The subject was 'Computer applications in Libraries - What do you want from your Library service?' Keith was able to provide a framework of considerations that librarians should address before making the decision to computerize. It was a very valuable session and we look forward to the second part of 'Computer applications in Libraries' on July 12, 1984.

Mr. Paul Hodgson (NLA) also spoke at the May meeting. Two subjects he discussed were the introduction of AUSTPAC and the present state of progress of the Australian Medical Index.

Peer Review

Have you been approached directly or know of another medical librarian who may be coming up for Peer Review? If this is the case, you would be well advised to contact a member of your Executive who can provide you with some pertinent information on this subject.

Victorian Branch Council happenings...

Some of the matter discussed at the May meeting included:

**Treasurer's report : allocations to Divisions. Branch Council is to re-distribute an allocation of \$450 (from '84 budget) for awards to students of librarianship. This sum is to be re-allocated from Awards and Honoraria to Allocation to Divisions. Both the Medical Libraries Section and Library Technicians Section are to be allocated one quarter respectively of such re-allocated funds - so, extra funds to deserving groups!

**Work level standards for Librarians and Library Technicians. Still in progress, this one! The Public Libraries Section has sent comments to the Working Party concerned. A motion that the members comprising the Working Party be broadened considerably (ie. wider range of people from more diverse libraries) was carried.

**Education Libraries Section. To fill in : Janette Wright reported on a discussion paper by the Public Service Board on work level standards. One of the matter proposed was the phasing out of trainee library technician positions in the State Library. The Ed. Lib. Section felt that the LAA should strongly oppose this.

For copies of the minutes containing information on the above points, as well as much more - please contact any member of your Executive.

LAA - General Council

Minutes of a meeting held on March 30 and 31, 1984 are available for your perusal from Aina Zalitis (Cancer Institute) or Brenda Lee (Alfred Hospital). A whole range of issues were discussed at LAA House in Ultimo, so please don't hesitate to contact either of the above if you're interested.

Conference Planning Committee

Busy, busy, busy this committee has been in its planning and organizing for the Australian Medical Librarians Conference in Melbourne, 1985. Jo Marshall (Monash Library, Alfred Hospital) is the new convenor for the Committee.

Have your Say

The LAA Executive Director is currently calling for comments from members by mid-July on three issues. They are :

- (a) Draft Media Release Policy
- (b) Draft Code of Ethics
- (c) Structure of the LAA

All Executive members have copies of these drafts and are more than happy to send you reprints of one or more of the drafts. Feel free to ring, but you'll need to be quick as the deadline for comments is TUESDAY, JULY 10. Comments to be sent to Susan Liepa (5 Wellwood Sq., Wheelers Hill. Vic. 3150).

Copyright Amendment Act - what's your problem?

The chance of a lifetime!! You'll have to act quickly though! If you have any grievances or problems in relation to the Copyright Amendment Act, now's the time to speak up (ring an Executive member), or put pen to paper. Don't let this chance slip by - if you have any type of 'Copyright' problem, be prepared to report it to your Executive by July 10, 1984 to enable your comments to carry weight. Mary McGill (Medical Library, St. Vincent's Hospital) is especially happy to receive comments.

National Continuing Education Programme - 1984

Remember those questionnaires given to members at our last meeting of May 8? They asked for your level of interest in attending different courses/seminars offered by the LAA as part of its national continuing education programme for 1984/85. In order for the LAA to mount such seminars at a state or local level, feedback is required from YOU. Completed questionnaires are to be sent to Anne Parkhowell (Main Campus Library, Lincoln Institute of Health Sciences) or handed in at our next meeting of July 12. For those people who missed out on receiving a form, these can be obtained from Anne Parkhowell or Andrew Rooke (School of Nursing Library, Prince Henry's Hospital). Just a recap on those eight seminars/courses:-

Time Management - includes definition of time management and its application to work; planning the use of time; techniques for dealing with time problems and time wasters.

Financial Management - discusses concepts of financial efficiency and sources of financial information; examines financial planning and decision-making techniques, etc.

Managing People at Work - examines the skills and techniques that contribute to the effective management of people, as well as demonstrating how they may be applied to specific workplace responsibilities.

Marketing Library and Information Services - designed to acquaint participants with the main concepts and principles of marketing; shows how these approaches may be used by library and information services.

Measurement and Evaluation of Library and Information Services - reviews concepts of measurement and evaluation as applied to library and information services, especially recent developments; provision of a range of criteria for evaluating services.

Microcomputers and their applications in Libraries - designed to provide an understanding of microcomputing development and an introduction to their applications in library and information services. Topics include: micro-computer developments, micros in libraries, selection and evaluation of hardware and software.

National Continuing Education Programme - 1984 (continued)

Serials Automation - reviews recent developments in serials automation including acquisitions, cataloguing and resource sharing. Topics also include the production of catalogues and union lists; in-house systems and packages for serials management and control.

Government Documents and Information - topics covered include: categories of govt. documents published and semi-published; access to departmental materials including handbooks and manuals; access to govt. reports and discussion papers; implication of federal Freedom of Information legislation.

What's on elsewhere

- August 27 - 31. LAA/NZLA Conference in Brisbane. Registration to be paid by June 30, 1984.
- August Canberra and Brisbane. "Advanced Management Skill Institutes" To be held by OMS (Office of Management Studies/Association of Research Libraries, 1527 New Hampshire Ave., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036). For more details on these institutes please contact : Margaret Trask, Head, School of Library and Information Studies, Kuring-Gai College of Advanced Education, Eton Rd., LINDFIELD. N.S.W. 2070.
- October 2 - 3 National Library, Canberra. IMPAG meeting. (International MEDLARS Policy Group)
- October 4 - 5 A.C.T. Medical Librarians' Group seminar "Health information - the next five years". Further details available from the A.C.T. Medical Librarians' Group, PO Box 760, WODEN, A.C.T.

Now we continue with some impressions of Sandra Russell's exchange visit to Seattle, Washington. This is a direct follow-on from the insert by Sandra in the last newsletter of April, 1984.

sandra's say

"Most libraries in the U.S.A. are looking to automation to streamline operations and improve services. Some of the very large libraries (including the University of Washington) are still functioning under great difficulty with manual systems. This is due to the problem of finding sufficient capital to install a large system.

Special libraries, including hospital libraries are installing microcomputers to perform many functions. Initial use is usually for housekeeping routines : budgeting, statistics, word processing, periodical accessions. Other functions may be added later : loans, cataloguing, online searching. The practice of downloading online search results onto a disk for reformatting or later printing is causing database producers and entrepreneurs many headaches. The problem was considered at length at the National Online Meeting in 1983, but no satisfactory solution was found.

Database entrepreneurs are now looking towards end users to increase their user population, and are offering simplified versions of major databases, or microcomputer programmes which act as "intermediaries" and guide the searcher.

The "BRS After Dark" and Dialog "Knowledge Index" offer after-hours access on home computers to MEDLINE, BIOSIS and about twenty other major data bases. To the experienced online user, the restraints of the simplified search process are frustrating. They do not allow reliable, sophisticated searching. End-user acceptance is, as yet, unknown.

The American Medical Association in association with GTE have devised a database for medical practitioners - AMANet. It is a full-text, online version of three A.M.A. handbooks, covering diagnosis, current procedure, drug prescription, and a small bibliographic file of Medical Socioeconomic Resources. Although it is aimed at the end-user, we found it to be a clumsy, time-consuming (and therefore expensive) system, with little to recommend it in preference to the hard copy version. Its main attraction may be its electronic mail facility.

The Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) is looking to the end user market with its microcomputer programme called SCIMate. This programme translates all the commands and responses of the major online systems e.g. NLM, Dialog, into a common input and response format, and also offers a package for storing and reformatting the results into a personal information file. I have yet to see an objective evaluation of this system".

Sad news

It is with the deepest regret that we note the death of two medical librarians - Ann Webb (Library, Warrnambool Base Hospital) and Dr. Patricia Nagler (Library, Walter and Eliza Hall Institute). Both passed away in May 1984, and we extend heartfelt sympathy to their families, friends and colleagues.

MEDICAL LIBRARIES SECTION - VICTORIAN GROUP

Computer Applications in Libraries

Part 2 : Evaluation of available systems

Thursday, July 12, 1984

Speakers : Mr. K. Davison,
Ballarat C.A.E.

Mr. G. Dudley,
State Library of Victoria.

Cocktails 5.00 - 6.00 pm

Meeting commences at 6.00 pm

Medical Library,
Royal Children's Hospital

RSVP July 9, 1984 to R.C.H.
Ph : 345 5107