



# LIBRARY NEWS

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 publication

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# THE ACADEMIC LIBRARY IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

IS IT CHANGING, AND IF SO HOW?

AND HOW MIGHT IT EVOLVE WHEN

ACCESS TO INFORMATION IS INCREASING

FROM OUTSIDE ITS WALLS?

**Helen King, Associate Librarian (Bendigo) explored this topic in her paper presented at the 21st annual conference of the International Association of Technological University Libraries held in Brisbane recently. Ms King was awarded the IATUL essay prize for the best paper from a participant who had not previously presented at an IATUL conference.**



The evidence collected via a recent survey of Australian universities revealed a great deal of library building activity either underway or in the planning stages. Seventeen universities provided details of significant undertakings, including new buildings, library extensions and major reconfigurations of existing library space.

### What is driving library building development?

- These initiatives were driven by a number of factors, including
- the establishment of new campuses and the recognition of the need for a library facility
  - the need to reconfigure space in existing library facilities
  - the need to provide facilities which allowed the library to link with allied areas such as student and IT services, thus capitalising on potential synergies.



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## THE ACADEMIC LIBRARY IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY Cont. from Pg.1

### Assumptions about the library of the future

Survey respondents also outlined their assumptions about the academic library of the future which underpinned the planning for these building projects (expected to have "life spans" of some 15 to 20 years). They predicted

- an ongoing need for print resources
- increasing independence and demand for self service by library users
- continued reliance on accessing scholarly information on campus
- increasing emphasis on flexible, resource based and collaborative learning
- demand for 7x24 access to facilities
- a key role for library professionals in the uptake of educational technologies on campus and the teaching of electronic and information literacy skills
- demand for the one-stop shop for electronic resources, tools and assistance
- more rather than less space for electronic access with its associated equipment and furniture requirements.

These predictions were shaping the nature of the library as a physical place.

### Innovative features

The innovative features of the modern library buildings were identified as

- electronic classrooms and group training facilities
- group study spaces equipped with full facilities for laptops
- 24 hour access to high demand facilities
- multi-purpose computer workstations
- integrated IT, media and reference assistance points
- specialised facilities for markets such as postgraduates and researchers
- provision of self service facilities such as open reserve and self checkout for loans
- open access compactus shelving for lesser used print material
- adjacent social spaces such as coffee bars or cafes.

### The importance of the academic library as a physical place

The survey suggested that the need for library space and facilities, at least in Australia, was indeed increasing in the current electronic and print hybrid information environment.

The extent of building activity indicated the continuing importance of the academic library as a physical place, a place

- to access information
- where assistance is available to help select, evaluate and utilise this information
- for collaborative study and quiet reflection

The library building can also provide an important visible, identifiable and physical image for the parent institution.

The full text of the paper will shortly be available at <http://educate.lib.chalmers.se/iatul/index.html>

## NEW SOLUTION FOR HIGH USE MATERIAL

**The first phase of a far-reaching project to deliver information in digital format seeks to replace a core of highly used print material with the same in electronic format. It will have particular application in the development of the Library's serials and reserve collections, and will include an investigation of the clients' preferences for access to and delivery of digital information.**

La Trobe University Library is a partner with other Victorian university libraries in this collaborative project, referred to as the Victorian Academic Digital Library (VADL). The project is attracting interest both locally and overseas, and aims to promote and implement

- resource sharing in the digital environment
- cooperative purchasing and management of electronic resources, particularly for journals and electronic reserve,
- a consortium approach to licence negotiation
- efficient document delivery to the client desktop

The first step of VADL is the development of

a database containing accurate records of the journal holdings in any format (print, microform, or electronic) of all the member libraries. The records are being sourced from the National Library of Australia's Kinetica database and from the individual local systems of the libraries. By the end of November 2000 the database should be in place to provide the tool for the identification of duplicate titles and the selection of electronic resources for purchase by the consortium.

The project is strongly supported by the National Library of Australia and has generated increasing interest among other library consortia, particularly in the development of the database as a model for other resource sharing activities.

**Barbara Paton**

# POSITIVE RESPONSE TO READS PROJECT

**A survey of users of the pilot READS service for chemistry and physics serials has demonstrated a most encouraging response.**

**READS (Regional Electronic Access and Delivery of Serials) is a joint project with Melbourne and Monash university libraries, and was launched in October 1999.**

Registered users have access to the whole READS collection - the current physics and chemistry print journal subscriptions of the three universities. Access is either via a print subscription in the local library, or web-based online access to searchable contents pages plus rapid delivery of articles requested directly from the other libraries. Because the collection is all within the Melbourne region, a visit to the physical collection is a readily available option if needed.

The survey indicated that the speed of delivery for requested articles was extremely well received and reports of experience using the READS web site were generally positive. In addition, more than 70% of survey respondents said they would be more prepared to accept local cancellations of a journal title in future if they could be assured that the title would be incorporated in the READS collection.

As a result of these findings the trial is to be extended to the end of 2001.

Continuing to provide students and researchers with access to the necessary range of quality information sources is a challenge for university libraries in Australia today. Expenditure must be constrained whilst there is an expanding array of products

on offer, all with escalating costs. READS is one strategy the Library is investigating in response. It is based on co-operative action, pooling resources and the effective application of technology.

During the next period of the project the libraries will seek to rationalise the current subscriptions by cancelling some which are held in common, and reinvesting some of the savings in subscriptions to wanted titles not currently taken.

More information can be obtained on the READS site (<http://www.lib.monash.edu.au/reads/>) or by contacting the Library.

**Jan Maslen**



## DISTANCE STUDENTS MOVE CLOSER

**The Library is breaking new ground in addressing the challenge of providing services for students (undergraduate and postgraduate) who are studying at a distance, be they offshore, online, or those who do not attend a campus on a regular basis.**

Peggy Cochrane, Interlending and Document Delivery Supervisor, is responsible at the Bundoora campus for coordinating services to these students. She is concerned that the students are made aware of what is on offer in being able to request photocopies of journal articles and chapters from books, sourced both from La Trobe University Library and, for postgraduate students, from libraries throughout the world. Subject librarians also assist in finding materials and will advise on how to search databases on the Internet.

Books and photocopied articles are sent out to students enrolled in online courses, as well as to those enrolled in a course given at a La Trobe University campus but who live at a distance and do not attend on a regular basis. Books, however, are not sent to students offshore.

The Library is aware that quality information is vital to students studying at a distance and in conjunction with academic staff is currently reviewing how best to assist these students with their information needs.

**Margaret Wanklyn**

# CHINESE NEWSPAPER INDEX ON THE WEB

An index to the first four years of the Tung Wah Times (1902-1936, previously the Tung Wah News 1898-1901) is now available on the library web site and the indexing of the rest of the newspaper is proceeding. This newspaper is probably the most important publication in the history of Australia's Chinese communities and contains high-quality editorial and comments on many social and political affairs in both Australia and China which reflect the views of Chinese communities in Australia at that time.

The Index to the Tung Wah Times is part of the 'Chinese Heritage of Australian Federation Project' which is a collaborative project involving La Trobe University, the Museum of Chinese Australian History, Melbourne, and East China Normal University, Shanghai. Project outcomes include the recovery and presentation of historical materials and indexes concerning Chinese Australians, translation of Chinese-language historical documents, a world-wide-web site, travelling exhibitions, and publications. The project

is supported by the National Council for the Centenary of Federation.

Entries in the Index are arranged by date of publication, and a "Search" option allows keyword searching with entries sorted in ascending or descending order. The URL for information about the Chinese Heritage of Australian Federation Project and for the Tung Wah Times Index is: <http://chaf.lib.latrobe.edu.au>.

**Julie Marshall**



**The Borchardt Library has been the centre of numerous festivities over recent months with the retirement of well-known senior staff members Rosemary Griffiths and Julie Marshall.**

Rosemary has worked at La Trobe University Library since the early days at 474 St Kilda Road, commencing in Acquisitions and moving on to make a significant contribution to the work of the Reference team at Bundoora. In more recent years she has been in charge of the Acquisitions Division and overseen major changes brought about with the

## SENIOR STAFF ON THE MOVE

introduction of the new library system. Despite the challenges imposed by diminishing budgets and the progression to an electronic environment, Rosemary retained her delightful sense of humour and provided good cause for warm celebrations amongst her friends.

Julie moved to the Library from Tasmania in the late 60s, and with a flair for tracking down the most remote of sources, established herself as a reference librarian and freelance researcher over the ensuing years.

Her strong direction of the interlending and document delivery operation at Bundoora established the section as an acknowledged leader in Australia, and the reduction in turnaround times and the successful delivery of obscure materials set a standard by which other services could be measured. Julie was Division Head of

Reference in recent years, leading a team most successfully in providing an expanding range of services to a wider client base. Her diverse range of interests ensures that she will be back amongst library friends, delving further into the resources she helped establish.

Alison Bates (Acquisitions) and Jackie Saunders (Reference) are Acting Heads of the Divisions until early 2001. Andrea Sims is Acting Head of the User Services Division while Jackie is on secondment.

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