

Library Week 1994

Gordon Dunlop, Library Week Coordinator

Our inaugural Library Week was a tremendous success. Throughout the week of July 25 to 31 we presented a diverse programme of eighty recreational, social and library-related activities, which were very well attended by students and staff of the university, as well as many members of the general public.

Library Week was designed to increase positive awareness of the library and forge stronger links with the rest of the university community. It was an opportunity to promote and celebrate the diversity of our collections, services and staff. Our slogan, "Off The Shelf", suggested by Lea Richardson of Copy Cataloguing Services, conveyed a multiplicity of positive meanings, in particular the idea of the Library coming off the shelf to meet its clientele in a more informal setting.

Library Week received considerable media coverage both on and off campus - in *UniNews*, *Farrago*, *The Age*, *The Melbourne Times*, and on radio stations 3LO and Triple R.

Highlights of the week included the Great Bake Off, featuring recipes from our Cookery Book Collection, "Books are dead : the Debate", presented by the Debating Society, two sporting Challenge Matches, the Laminating Service (141 laminations in three days), the "Lasting Impression" seminars on book preservation, the guided tours of the special exhibitions *Fifteenth & 16th Century Illustrated Books* and *Influence of Durer*, the Mad Hatter's Tea Party, a barbecue for students, morning and afternoon teas (catering to an average of 200 people at each session) and the Asian Tea Tasting presented by the staff of our East Asian Section.

Catering was a popular feature of Library Week. It livened up the Baillieu and Education Resource Centre foyers, broke the ice with patrons and was a good opportunity to publicise other activities. The Music in the Foyers program, a good mix of classical and contemporary styles, also proved very popular and, like the morning and afternoon teas, served as a focus for Library Week celebration and activity.

There were practical workshops dealing with the relationship between study, fitness and relaxation, presented by the Learning Skills Unit, the Counselling Service and the Sports Centre.

At the Friends of the Baillieu Library Annual Dinner, Dr. Janet McCalman, author of *Journeyings : the biography of a middle-class generation, 1920 -1990*, gave a stimulating

talk on the technical and ethical challenges of writing oral history. Sally Morrison, introduced by Professor Chris Wallace-Crabbe from the Australian Centre, gave a lunchtime reading from her novel *Mad Meg*. A character in the novel was based on the first Italian tutor at the University of Melbourne in the 1920's. Sally talked about her experiences while researching in Italy. The Melbourne Writers Group all-day workshop, utilising seven presenters and four venues, proved extremely popular, with over 120 people attending.

Tom Cochrane, the Director of Information Services at the Queensland University of Technology, delivered the Annual Library Lecture : "Integration or Affiliation : Libraries and Computing Services in Universities in the 90's".

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor David Penington, formally opened the newly relocated Research Collection in the Education Resource Centre of the Institute of Education (Carlton).

The Short Story Competition attracted eleven entries. The story which won first prize, "James" by Jennifer Willis, was published in the August issue of *Ex Libris*.

Library Awards were presented to Dr. Glyn Rimmington, Professor Rod Home, Associate Professor Charles "Chips" Sowerwine, Mr. John Wilde and Mr. Douglas Ray for their continuing support of the Library, and to library staff members John Terrell, Alison Pearce and Jane Garner for

Below:
The Faculty of Music Guitar Ensemble, with Jochen Schubert in the Baillieu Foyer



academic achievements in library studies.

The primary achievements of Library Week were undoubtedly the positive feedback and good will it generated for the Library, as well as improved co-operation and contacts with the wider university community. We certainly succeeded in our intention of raising the library's profile. A buzz of activity and a lively, festive atmosphere were evident, particularly in the Bailieu, the Education Resource Centre, Architecture and other branch Libraries. Branch activities included a tour of Archives and displays in the Chemistry and Physics Branches, the Institute of Education at Kew and the Grainger Museum. Library staff seemed to appreciate the atmosphere too, and feedback was very favourable.

We managed to generate interest from members of our profession, the library schools and the general public, particularly for "A Look Behind the Scenes" (a tour of the Information Resources Division), "Books are dead: the Debate" (which was won by the team arguing against the proposition), the guided tours of the rare book and print exhibitions, the novel reading and the Melbourne Writers Group Workshop.

Most events were perceived to be successful by their co-ordinators and, more importantly, their participants. The attendance figures speak for themselves, but a small audience can be just as enthusiastic and appreciative as a large one, and we would always want to support some activities with minority appeal. We received very positive feedback via Library Week Evaluation forms, the Feedback Board, mail messages and word of mouth, both about individual events and the week

in general. In the wake of Library Week we have received numerous requests for tours, talks, photographs and other Library and Library Week information.

The quality of presentation and the preparation that went into events were also identified as significant factors in their success. No events were cancelled, signage was enhanced for the week (to ensure venues were readily located), and there were no late starts or double bookings. Staff who volunteered for rosters were absolutely reliable and displayed great resourcefulness and initiative, especially given the pressure under which many of the preparations were made.

Sponsorship was another of Library Week's major breakthroughs and achievements. We had thirteen sponsors altogether - among them Melbourne University Credit Co-operative, the JTM Group (now Interco Logistics), Mel-

bourne University Press, the Art Salon Bookshop, The Carlton Inn, Thresherman's Bakehouse and the Smorgon Butcher Shop. Sponsorship considerably enhanced our budget and thereby flexibility. It was a happy accident that many of our sponsors happened to be food retailers, as this enabled us to cater for many more events than originally planned. We have established a good rapport with a number of local businesses who have indicated willingness to sponsor us again in the future.

Collaboration with Student Services and the Student Union, as well as Student Clubs and other departments, on the scale which we undertook for Library Week, is quite unprecedented and was very successful. The groups with whom we collaborated all seem to have been satisfied with attendances and have indicated their willingness to engage in further joint efforts

in or out of Library Week. Networking and information exchange with the rest of the university community were features of all the "behind the scenes" activity.

The Committee worked wonders with its modest budget, supplementing it with sponsorship, profits from the entrepreneurial laminating service and the sale of residual catering goods.

In an already very busy, resource-stretched environment, it is difficult to achieve maximum levels of participation in what some might regard as a non-essential, extra-curricular activity, but it is estimated that about a third of the library's total staff were directly or indirectly involved in the staging of our first Library Week.

We hope to build on the outstanding success of this year's event in Library Week 1995.



Mad Hatters at the Tea Party