

Report of the Council

1978

Monash University

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Front cover: One of the buildings housing the University
offices (from a sketch by Arno Roger-Genersh)

Photographs in this Report are by Hervé Alleaume, Richard Crompton,
and Claude Sironi

tion of sub-dean in September and reverted to a full-time senior lectureship in the department of Mathematics. The faculty is most grateful to Mrs Cumming for her outstanding and pioneering contribution as sub-dean. This post has now been filled by part-time secondment of Dr Stella Crossley from the department of Psychology. Professor J. M.

Swan has completed his third year as dean. He has continued to represent the University on the Australian-Asian Universities Cooperation Scheme, on the Council of the Victorian Institute of Marine Sciences (as Deputy President) and on the Executive of the Victorian Universities Admissions Committee.

Library

Librarian: Mr T. B. Southwell, B.A. (Syd.), A.L.A.A.

In retrospect, 1978 was a busy and a satisfying year, quite contrary to expectations. The government-imposed limitation on the carry-forward of funds from year to year imposed an unexpected urgency in the commitment and actual expenditure of the money available. Staff members were quite extensively re-deployed in order that purchasing decisions and action could be speeded up without being mindlessly rushed. Wherever possible funds were devoted to projects which reduced rather than increased the commitment for the future; these included the 'paying-out' of subscriptions to large purchases and such labour-intensive jobs as the badging for automatic data entry of all books in the undergraduate, Hargrave and Biomedical Libraries.

This last job had started in November 1977. The whole undergraduate library collection was processed by the beginning of first term, and library staff had worked with student records personnel to fix machine-readable badges to all re-enrolling students' identity cards. The Plessey light pens and monitoring equipment were in operation in the Main Library by February and with virtually no problems the system and its interface with the well-tried computer back-up went into operation in March. Users were pleased at the ease of borrowing and the accuracy, staff were happy at the control of wanted books and defaulting borrowers, and key-

punch operators were released, either not replaced or re-assigned to the processing of new material and material from the Hargrave and Biomedical Libraries. Badging of books in these two libraries took place during vacations, and was completed before the end of the year, for equipment installation early in 1979.

In addition, an agreement was concluded to permit S.C.V. Rusden to use the central facilities, both hardware and software, and enquiries have been received from S.V.C.s at Burwood and Toorak. It is most encouraging to see the investment in equipment and manpower being shared and providing a useful return.

On a wider front, solid progress was made by CAVAL, the cooperative library agency set up under the aegis of the Victorian Universities and Colleges Committee. An interim director and a small staff were appointed, and the organisation was registered as a company. Of more immediate interest, important work was done in identifying the cataloguing support needs of the twenty-eight libraries concerned, and such agencies as could be called on to meet those needs. Tenders have been called for an interim system, and it is hoped to be servicing at least some of the member libraries by mid-1979. Monash has long been associated with the scheme, and it is therefore not surprising that calls have been made on Monash staff to assist in many ways.

The Centre for Migrant Studies and the University Library have announced the establishment of an Ethnic Heritage Collection. Acting chairman of the Centre, Associate Professor Michael Clyne, holds a copy of *The English and Chinese Advertiser*, published on the goldfields in 1857.



CAVAL's impact has so far been mainly on technical services staff, who are having to re-appraise techniques and even aims in the light of expected changes. Of more immediate interest for reader services people and the library's users has been AUSINET (the on-line information retrieval network) which completed its first full year of operation with a wider range of data bases available, for much more of the time. The service is used heavily in the Humanities and Social Sciences Library; a second terminal has been installed in the Biomedical Library (who are,

of course, already heavy users of MEDLINE) and it is hoped soon to provide access for Hargrave and Law. Improvements in communication announced by O.T.C. and TELECOM make it likely that relatively low-cost access to American data bases will be available in 1979. Reference staff are finding these services invaluable, but there is concern at the time they absorb, as much in preparation for data searches as in the searches themselves.

The year was made difficult for technical services staff by the requirement mentioned

earlier that money should be not only committed but spent by the year's end. After a slow start, this required that a very intense rate of ordering was needed by the period before September to ensure delivery in time. To assist the sadly reduced acquisitions department, staff were transferred temporarily from cataloguing and reader services and casuals hired. It is a tribute to all concerned that the job was carried out with accuracy and care as well as speed, and that those in the depleted departments carried their extra loads with good heart. To put the operation into perspective, the number of orders placed exceeded those in 1977 by 64 per cent.

In cataloguing, too, output was increased despite the heavy losses of time in help to acquisitions and in long service leave and despite the extra work involved in upgrading records to support extensions of the circulation system.

Loans to students were again stationary or slightly lower in all areas except the Biomedical Library; on the other hand staff loans increased by some 18 per cent, the increases being most marked in the Humanities and Social Sciences Library. Total loans were over 534 000 as against 516 000 in 1977. Inter-library loans continued to rise (from 23 234 to 26 799) and borrowings from other libraries fall (from 5903 to 5604). The introduction in August of an interloan 'currency' by the Library Association of Australia should go some way to cover the cost of the photocopies mostly supplied — it may also reduce guilt feelings in libraries who use this library heavily and in fact increase such use.

Reader education activities have been expanded in Humanities and Social Sciences and in Law, but all libraries have now reached what appears to be the limit with present staff numbers. The need for this and other reference services is still expanding, notably with the introduction by both Law and Education of summer schools, both quite heavily library-based.

The general pattern of library provisions to Medical faculty staff located at teaching hospitals has been the co-existence of a hospital library and a sub-branch of the Biomedical Library. Past attempts to rationalise the situation have been fruitless but attitudes have changed with the changed financial climate and discussions at both the Alfred Hospital and the Queen Victoria Medical Centre give some cause for hope. A new library is being established by Moorabbin Hospital, and this is being supported from birth by the Biomedical Library, for the benefit of University staff and students located there. The Biomedical Library has broadened the base of its service to hospital management following receipt of the first instalment of the Kellogg Foundation grant. Effectively two staff members have been employed, the library's holdings have been materially strengthened, and the service is reaching out, initially by personal contact, to the islands of the Pacific.

It was sad that Ms Marea Terry decided to return to Sydney, but her position as Librarian, Humanities and Social Sciences, has been taken by Ms Moira MacKinnon. Ms MacKinnon is currently honorary secretary of the Victorian Branch of the Library Association of Australia, and convener of the Technical Sub-Committee of AUSINET. Mrs Fay Baker, Biomedical Librarian, serves on the Consultative Committee to the Regional Medical Librarian, Hospital and Charities Commission, a position which has certainly assisted with some of the moves mentioned above. She has also been seconded during the year to the World Health Organization for advisory missions to Fiji and to South Korea. Mr Ted Glasson, Law Librarian, is a director of the International Association of Law Librarians and again attended their annual workshop, this year on Japanese Law and held in Tokyo.

The use of audio-visual material is increasing daily in most of the libraries. Being still a young institution, much of our holdings of retrospective publications are in microform,

and its usage (as measured in the Main Library) has increased by almost a third in one year. The Readings for the Blind service had only two clients for the year and was able to cope quite comfortably.

Staff has been provided to assist and supervise in the development of a Resources Centre in the Centre for Research into Aboriginal Affairs.

In summary, 1978 was a year of modest growth and satisfaction for jobs attempted

and completed or at least with a promise of completion with current resources. The triennium to come looks bleaker. Prices are still rising, demands are not slackening. It is with this background that we thank again the Parents' Association whose continued support is so encouraging, the Friends of the Library, who can be counted on to provide that extra delightful volume we could not otherwise afford, and the hundreds of donors to the Library Appeal who still, we gladly note, wish to maintain contact with Monash and its library.