

**Sixteenth Annual  
Conference  
of the  
Australian  
And  
New Zealand  
Theological  
Library  
Association**

***A REPORT***

*by the  
Vice President Philip Harvey*



Conference held at Vaughan Park, Torbay, via Auckland, New Zealand 5th to 8th July 2001

In the Thursday afternoon Cataloguing Session we looked at the 'de-theologisation' of Library of Congress subject headings, a subtle problem (Theology) replaced by dash Religious Aspects dash Christianity. There was also an open discussion, which in fact will go on for years, about the dichotomy (albeit a false one) about our catalogues and their place in the worldwide electronic environment. How far should we go in treating our catalogues as reference tools? Where do we draw the line? Amongst other contenders for the coveted Worst Subject Heading of the Year, we heard of: 'Culture shock - Description and travel' (say no more); 'Thomas Merton, 1915-1968 - Meditations' (we do not meditate on Thomas Merton, but on what he said and wrote); and 'Conflict management in the Bible' (no arguments about its questionableness).

On the Thursday evening Chris Szekely of Manukau Libraries Nga Whare Matauranga o Manukau, showed how promoting ourselves is fundamental to our job of getting done what has to be done for our users. It is not possible to have multiculturalism in New Zealand Aotearoa without biculturalism, an interesting consideration for Australians. Chris was coordinator of research into why Maori were not using libraries. Amongst other reasons, because of lack of intellectual access, they have to decode the means to the materials, and they only use libraries where other Maori work. One solution was to take the libraries out to the Maori. Dedication to Maori language comes out in bilingual dedication in the public libraries, for example Chris's own Manukau library, which was to be called Dawson Road Library (in Dawson Road, oddly enough) before a lobby group succeeded in having it named Tupu Library. Tupu means new growth.

Friday morning, Tony Westcott of St John's College spoke of publicity and the importance of defining our core business. He reminded us that we work inside church systems and need to get through to as well as beyond those systems. We have captive markets, so that in advertising we need to think about who we want to use the library and what we want the library to represent. Brian Flaherty of Auckland University Library talked about promoting ourselves using electronic resources. He contrasted the internet with a huge building site, apposite after seeing slides of the state of his own library at present. We learnt the astonishing fact that the Vatican is seriously considering making St Isidore of Seville the Patron Saint of the Internet, because he made the world's first encyclopedia (20 vols.). Consequent searching on the Catholic Community Forum revealed that indeed

rum revealed that indeed this occurred in 1999 and that he is also patron of computer technicians, computer users, and computers; that Isidore is traditionally depicted beside a beehive may be more than coincidental. Brian stated that by 2010 most information will be taken off the Internet. In the future, librarians will increasingly become involved in publishing, perhaps a theme for a future conference. And he asserted that librarians now need to be IT literate, by definition.

Friday afternoon we heard from Filomena Davies, Lorraine Orman, and Lesley Utting on promoting ourselves as experts. Information literacy is not just about computers and technology. It is our business to show people they have to learn how to learn. Today people are in danger though of killing themselves with information stress; there is even a Dutch professor who has researched the subject. While empowering people with different literacies, we have to be aware of Information Fatigue Syndrome. Being a passionate teacher is important, we have to make a difference when it comes to searches.

This is the first year the conference photo opportunity was noted in the program; future planners may want to extend the time frame for this section from ten minutes. Efforts to include the beach view in the pictures were applauded by Lawrence McIntosh with the comment, "It's good to have something to look at." A special ecotheology practical session was scheduled for the truly determined. Librarians disappeared off to the beach and into the undergrowth, bescarved and clutching packets of Fruit Tingles. A questionnaire that went with this experience had one reply to the request Define 'Ecotheology': ecotheologyologyologyologyologyologyology.

The AGM was held in the evening. The Association voted for incorporation. We agreed to fixed terms for President, at last. And we elected a new President who is both a New Zealander and a woman, which is a very good thing. Some amongst us even learnt that people in elected positions can do more than one job at the same time.

On Saturday we took a daytrip to theological libraries in Auckland. The conference dinner was held on site and we all agreed that the cuisine at Vaughan Park was uniformly excellent, likewise the superb selection of local wines courtesy of Margaret Grigg. We had the great bonus of Scottish songs being performed, then after dinner enjoyed a ceile. There was a dance, a first for ANZTLA. Delegates, some of them delicates, who try to avoid the cut and thrust of conferences suddenly found their toes being trodden on by Lawrence McIntosh, or received a flying elbow from Val Canty.

Jocelyn Morris gave a very detailed presentation on special collections next morning, Sunday. We were reminded of Helen Greenwood's code, "know your collection." Stakeholders in our libraries know they have marvellous collections that can have political as well as scholarly uses and should be promoted accordingly. Jocelyn asked the basic question we all need to ask ourselves at times: if not for readers, then for whom are we saving all this stuff?

This year we had "ad breaks" (i.e. site insights) from Beverley McKenzie of Salvation Army Training College, Upper Hutt, New Zealand, Judith Curtis of College House Institute of Theology, Christchurch, New Zealand, Eileen McComber of Pacific Regional Seminary, Fiji, and Mark Hangartner of University of Auckland Library Te Tumu Herenga. Mark also composed and conducted a special Sunday morning liturgy.

We were privileged to stay at such a beautiful location and with such comfortable accommoda

tion. The whole conference was a pleasure to attend. The New Zealand Planning Committee are to be thanked for their foresight in selecting Vaughan Park and also for the sometimes fretful implications of that decision, especially the ferrying of delegates from places all over Auckland, not just the airport. We were given a marvellous variety of perspectives on promoting our libraries and how to do that shamelessly, in the loosest definition of that word.

Following the scheduled conference there was a two day consultation for visiting Pacific Island librarians. By this time the Vice President was already on the train steaming to Rotorua.

### **Special Pacific Consultation : Helen Greenwood reports:**

The two-day South Pacific Association of Theological Schools consultation took place at St. John's College following the ANZTLA Conference. There were seven participants from theological colleges around the Pacific, plus Judith Bright, Helen Greenwood and Kim Robinson. We were joined by Jie Deng, a person new to the field who is currently working at New Covenant International Bible College in Auckland. Jeanette Little was able to be with us on Monday morning and led an initial session discussing possible topics and facilitating an exchange of ideas. This was followed by a walk around the Kinder Library, looking at various areas and procedures; this was used as a starter for discussion on how things might be done elsewhere. After lunch, there was a practical, hands-on session on mending books, led by Shelley Walker, a student at St John's with particular expertise in this area. Then followed a general discussion on acquisitions.

On Tuesday, we spent the morning at Auckland University's New Zealand/Pacific department. We had a training session on computer databases that have particular relevance to Pacific studies and then took a look around the department. In the afternoon, we went to the trade exhibit at the conference of the International Association of School Librarians being held locally and on the way back, a brief stop at a local shopping centre. The Consultation concluded with a meal hosted by the Pacific faculty and students at St. John's College.



**Delegates to the Pacific consultation following the Conference:**  
Back row (l-r): Eileen McComber, Cindy Vanuaroro, Faatulituli Setu, Aukilani Tuuiwai, Gabriel Lovanitila, Helen Greenwood, Judith Bright, Denise James  
Front row (l-r): Kaakoa Ioane, Jie Deng, Jeanette Little, Savu Tawake, Kim Robinson

The Consultation was a great opportunity for all of us to get to know each other and learn from our different situations. We'll be keeping in touch in the future with mutual help where necessary.