

## ANZTLA AFFAIRS

It is good to be able to return from a long stint overseas and find that the work of ANZTLA has continued unabated: the newsletter has been published (despite the Editor also being overseas), ARI has been published, the new edition of *AULOTS* has been published, and the next conference has been organized. It makes you wonder: Does ANZTLA really need a President?

I discovered that those overseas who knew about the *Australasian Religion Index* (both in the United States and in the United Kingdom) were very impressed with what we are managing to produce on a shoestring budget. Thanks to all those whose voluntary efforts make it possible! I understand that subscriptions have increased sufficiently to make the financial foundations of the enterprise fairly secure. However, there are many potential subscribers, both locally and overseas, who don't yet know about ARI. It is up to all of us to spread the good news—both for their sakes and for ours! I hope you keep a small supply of ARI leaflets handy to slip into mailings to potential subscribers—particularly in theological and research libraries.

The new edition of the *Australasian Union List of Serials in Theological Collections* looks very impressive also. If you have it, you won't need to be convinced of its value. But you may know of others who need to know about it. It received good publicity in *InCite*. Thanks to Hans Arns for compiling it, Fr Michael Mason for technical assistance, and all the librarians around Australia and New Zealand who submitted the data.

It was also good to arrive home and find that the next conference had all been organized, without my having to play any part in it. The committee in Sydney has done an excellent job of planning and has organised a very full conference, with an overlapping joint session with the joint ANZATS/ANZSTS Conference. Following the last conference, as requested, I have written to the heads of all ANZATS theological colleges and seminaries, urging them to encourage and assist their library staff to attend our conferences, and have received some very positive feedback. We look forward to a big attendance in Sydney in July.

While in the United States, I kept coming across people who were surprised to discover the existence of ANZTLA and was happy to be able to point them to the *ANZTLA Newsletter* for more information. I had a number of requests for photocopies of particular articles. Special thanks to Philip Harvey and Rosalie Cotter for producing the last two issues.

The 13th February, 1991 turned out to be an historic day in the annals of international theological librarianship. When I met Margaret Ecclestone for lunch that day in London it was the first meeting of the Presidents of ANZTLA and the Association of British Theological and Philosophical Libraries. Patrick Lambe (who attended our Melbourne conference) also graced the occasion with his presence, before taking off for Singapore, from where he hopes to arrange library consultancy work. The meeting gave us all the opportunity to learn more about the nature and concerns of our two associations, and the library communities they seek to serve.

Another international meeting was a chance encounter in Columbus with Alvaro Perez, of Biblical Seminary, Costa Rica—the leading theological librarian in Central America. He was very keen to know more about ANZTLA, how it operates and what it does. He would like to organize a similar body to serve theological libraries in Central America.

I also made initial contact with Bill Cohen, publisher of Haworth Press. Their new *Journal of Religious and Theological Information* promises to fill a vital gap in the literature of international theological librarianship, and will be viewed with interest. Bill has promised to airmail some copies of the first issue.

Regarding the job exchange itself I hope to report in some detail in a later issue of the newsletter; however, the one thing above all that the experience convinced me of is the need for all theological libraries in Australia to become involved in the Australian Bibliographic Network and for New Zealand libraries in the New Zealand Bibliographic Network. Quite apart from the financial benefits to be gained, I think it is vital that we share our thinly spread resources and I can see no other feasible way of doing so than through these major networks. ABN and NZBN are not likely to become as big as OCLC (with which I worked in

the United States), but they can be just as great a blessing to us, if only we will use them for the benefit of one another and the communities we seek to serve.

A directory which I perused recently asserts that there are only twelve theological libraries in Australia with collections of more than 15,000 volumes. I don't know where the compiler got this erroneous information from, but it highlights the importance of up-to-date statistics being readily available to researchers. It is pleasing to note, therefore, that the ANZTLA statistics for 1988 have finally been published. Our aim now must be to regularly get the statistics into print within the year in which they are collected.

If you have been present at the last couple of conferences, you will recall the discussions on the proposal to broaden the scope of institutional membership. You are reminded that the following notice-of-motion, drafted at the 1990 conference, will be placed formally before the General Meeting this year:

'Institutional membership shall include the librarian-in-charge (or his/her deputy) and may include one other, nominated by the librarian-in-charge, for whom an additional fee is paid by the institution equivalent to the difference between the annual membership fee and the newsletter subscription'.

The General Meeting will also be asked to consider the proposal from the American Theological Library Association of formalising job exchanges between the two associations. Refer again to the letter of Eugene McLeod, which was published in the August, 1990 newsletter.

Regarding the 1992 conference, it was agreed that it be held in conjunction with the ANZATS/ANZSTS/SBL Conference. It has now been decided that this conference will be held in Melbourne, 12-17 July. There will be no separate ANZATS/ANZSTS Conference. The Victorian Chapter of ANZTLA, which has the responsibility of organising our 1992 conference, is looking at the possibilities of holding the ANZTLA Conference either a week before or after the SBL Conference.

Because of the forced change to the roster of ANZATS/ANZSTS Conference venues, it seems likely that New Zealand will still be the place for 1993 and Adelaide will take the place of Melbourne in 1994.

Having talked in the past year or two about assistance to libraries in areas bordering on Australia and New Zealand, we now have received specific requests for libraries in our area to take on librarians from Asia for several weeks or several months of on-the-job training and work experience. If you are interested and able to help, please contact me or the secretary of the Programme for Theology and Cultures in Asia, Mrs Rita England, 13 Hilldale Avenue, Christchurch, New Zealand. In addition to a suitable work environment, you would have to be able to provide suitable accommodation and access to necessary transportation.

If you have recently been in correspondence with the President, Secretary, or Editor, you will already know that ANZTLA now has its own letterhead. As requested by the 1990 conference, it was designed by Rev Peter Mendham. Thanks, Peter!

(Rev) Trevor Zweck,  
President.

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