

ANZTLA AFFAIRS

I am happy to be able to report that the potential problem for Australian libraries posed by the introduction of credit limitation by the Australian Bibliographic Network has been averted. The Network Committee, at its July meeting, has modified the scheme in such a way that small libraries like ours will not be disadvantaged in any way. As a result of the change, libraries will be allowed to earn \$2000 a month excess of credits over enquiry debits. This should be ample for any theological library.

It had been proposed to limit credits to 125% of enquiry debits, which would have disadvantaged small special libraries, because of their low hit rates and correspondingly high rates of original cataloguing. The situation is aggravated by the fact that very few libraries are currently contributing theological data to the National Bibliographic Database.

A survey taken at the recent ANZTLA Conference indicates that there are currently three libraries which are full participants in the Australian Bibliographic Network (contributing original cataloguing): St Mark's Canberra (the first in 1984), Luther Campus, North Adelaide, and Joint Theological, Parkville. There are currently no libraries which are full participants in the New Zealand Bibliographic Network. It is expected that the numbers will be boosted in the near future, however, when Moore Theological, Newtown and Vianney College, Wagga Wagga become participants in ABN and the two Dunedin libraries, Knox College and Holy Cross become the first participants in the NZBN. This will take the total of participants in the two countries to seven. In addition, there are ten search and products users (able to add holdings statements and to do copy cataloguing): Bible College of South Australia, Bible College of New Zealand, Catholic Education Office (Carlton), Catholic Institute of Sydney, Parkin-Wesley, St Barnabas, Tahlee Bible College, World Vision (Melbourne), Whitley and Christian Blind Mission International.

While this level of involvement is encouraging, it is obvious that much more needs to be done to foster cooperation between theological libraries and the development of the concept of the distributed national collection in our two countries. You will remember that, at the seventh annual conference (Adelaide, 1992) ANZTLA gave its endorsement to the involvement of member libraries in the national bibliographic networks. While this endorsement was done with some reservations on the part of some delegates and cannot be considered a wholehearted endorsement, it nevertheless constitutes a decision of great importance to the future of theological libraries and librarianship in Australia and New Zealand. It is probably the only feasible means of harnessing modern information technology to provide greater knowledge of and access to the theological materials of our widely scattered collections.

Since many libraries are concerned about the financial implications of getting involved in the national networks, the experience of Luther Campus in its first eight months of full user status may be helpful. During this time, we have catalogued 2525 items, 1365 being original cataloguing. (The latter includes clones, where it is possible to take an existing record for, say, a different edition and to copy it for another edition of the same work, altering only the few details which need to be altered, e.g. the edition statement, the publisher, date, pagination, etc.). In percentage terms, this works out to a hit rate of 48%, and an original cataloguing rate of 52%. In looking at these figures, it should be borne in mind that Luther has an unusually high proportion (about 20-25%) of foreign language materials. With this level of productivity, it has been possible to generate a surplus of credits over total debits of between \$500 and \$600 a month. The time taken over the production of a MARC record on ABN varies from a low of about 6-7 minutes to a high of 45-50 minutes, with the overall average being 15-20 minutes.

Search and products users, who use the network for copy-cataloguing, are finding that holdings credits cover a large proportion of their enquiry debits, to which must be added their communication costs.

It was extremely fortunate that automation at Luther had progressed to a point where it was possible to quote statistics which showed the glaring inequity of the ABN attempt at credit limitation. At the ABN Users' Meeting in Canberra, 12-13 July, Judy James (St Mark's Library) proposed the motion for modification of credit limitation which was subsequently adopted by the Network Committee and approved by the Director-General.

It is self-evident that the situation for all theological libraries involved will be improved as more theological libraries join the networks. When one considers the potential benefits, not only to individual libraries, but to the development of the distributed national collection of theological materials, it is hard to see why even the smallest library should not be involved in either ABN or NZBN.

In the course of extensive correspondence with ABN on the issue of credit limitation, I took the opportunity to emphasise the poverty of theological resources in Australia, which, for its size, would seem to be much worse off than New Zealand. (The latter, of course, has the disadvantage of smaller total numbers). The lack of resources in Australia, as reflected in the poor hit rates for older materials on ABN is caused by the general absence of large theological collections in the major academic and research libraries. It is an unfortunate accident of history that the secularisation of education in Australia which occurred during the last half of the nineteenth century has resulted in Australia being unique in the western world in the poverty of its theological resources. I used this fact to press for support, not discouragement, for theological libraries from ABN; however, it is also a challenge to theological libraries to do as much as possible to cooperate in collection building and documenting the availability of such materials as are held.

I am happy to be able to report that the style manual drafted by Dr Lawrence McIntosh is now into its third draft, having been reviewed by a panel of representatives of both the ANZATS and the ANZTLA, from both Australia and New Zealand, all of whom have voiced their overwhelming approval. In part one, the manual covers the presentation and mechanics of writing, including such topics as presentation, spelling, capitalisation, abbreviations, quotations, numbers and dates, biblical and ancient text references, and inclusive language. In part two, it covers the process of documentation, including documentation of sources, citation methods, citation styles, and citation elements, preliminary documentation, and notes and bibliographies. In part three, it covers citation formats, giving due prominence to both of the prevailing citation methods in the humanities, the none-bibliography method and the author-date method. The appendixes include lists of various categories of abbreviation. The bibliographies include not only books on style, but also manuals on research and writing and on inclusive language. It includes much material specifically relevant to religion and theology, including the examples. It also pays due regard to the style preferences of the Australian and New Zealand governments, skilfully adapting the wisdom of the world on style to the needs and exigencies of the local situation. The manual promises to be a most useful contribution to the process of theological education in our two countries.

Much of the time of the recent conference was taken up with high-tech discussions about special formats of the *Australasian Religion Index*. The Editorial Board reversed an earlier decision and decided to publish the five-year cumulation of ARI as a separate, hardcover volume, and not to incorporate it with the second issue for 1993. Thus, issue 5:2 will be published as usual at the end of 1993 and the five-year cumulation will appear some time early in 1994. In the meantime, the Editorial Management Committee is working on correcting mistakes which have crept into the five issues. Your help in locating mistakes would be appreciated. Report any necessary corrections to Joint Theological Library.

Regarding the proposal from the American Theological Library Association to produce a CD-ROM version of ARI, it was decided to delay further discussion until after the five-year cumulation has been produced. Then we will look at possibilities both for CD publication and for mounting the database online.

We were sad to bid farewell from newsletter duties to both Mrs Lynn Pryor and Mr Philip Harvey, who have edited 18 issues, from May 1987 (no. 3) to August 1993 (no. 20). Lynn and Philip took over the job at a time when the association was struggling to establish itself within the theological community of our two countries. That ANZTLA has been able to become so much a part of the theological education scene is in no small measure due to the quality of the newsletter. Though modest in format, the quality of its content is such that we owe a huge debt of gratitude to Lynn and Philip for their excellent work over the past six years. We are also extremely grateful to Rosemary Dillon of Whitley College, who has attended to all the typing for these 18 issues.

You may recall that, at the Adelaide conference last year, it was decided to seek ways and means of supporting library projects in Asia and the Pacific Islands. This resulted in two decisions of the 1993 conference, both of which involve the donation of A\$1000 to the Program for Theology and Cultures in Asia and to the South Pacific Association of Theological Schools Library Support Fund. We hope these donations will make a contribution in these areas and will serve to strengthen ties between the groups of libraries involved.

Regarding the Australasian Union List of Serials in Theological collections AULOTS, it has been decided that the updating be done on a regional basis, as has been done already by the Brisbane chapter. Each chapter should now take steps to create an automated update for the libraries in their area. The regional updates will then be combined into a new comprehensive edition of AULOTS. The coordinator of the project is Mr Ken Elder, Tahlee Bible College.

You may be interested in a tentative survey on awards which was also undertaken at the conference. The object was to see whether there seems to be any predominant type of award, according to which library staff in theological libraries are paid. Of those present at this session, the majority (i.e. seven) are paid according to a university award. The rest were evenly divided (three each) between State Public Service awards, Municipal awards, and church salary rates.

*(Rev) Trevor Zweck,
President.*

ANZTLA'S MOST MULTICULTURAL CONFERENCE

The theme was Angles on Acquisitions, but the emphasis on Asian and South Pacific resources and the libraries in these regions made the 1993 gathering the most multicultural conference held by the Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association. Held at Mt St Mary's Seminary, Greenmeadows, near Napier, New Zealand, the eighth conference attracted 22 Australians, a record twelve New Zealanders, and one from the Pacific islands. Now devoid of students (who have all moved to the teaching centre in Auckland), the seminary, set among the rural peace and tranquility of Mission Vineyards, proved an ideal location for the conference, held 8-11 July, 1993.