

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT'S REPORT, 1993-94

While the year under review has been one of considerable progress on the level of the individual library, with many making major ventures into the areas of automation and networking, it has been one of more modest (though significant) achievement for the Association, along with some major disappointments.

At the time of our last meeting some Australian theological libraries were experiencing some anxiety over the implications of the Australian Bibliographic Network's plan to introduce a form of credit limitation which would have seriously disadvantaged these libraries. It was a joy to note that, even as we met for our AGM, the ABN was already modifying its scheme of credit limitation in such a way that all libraries making a genuine contribution to the National Bibliographic Database would receive due credit for doing so. The credit limit is now set at a very reasonable A\$2000 a month. It is pleasing to note there are now several libraries making a major contribution to cooperative cataloguing, and pertinent to note that there is room for many more!

It is also a joy to note that the *Style manual* written by Dr Lawrence McIntosh has been published in time for the launching at the conference held on his own "home ground". This project received enthusiastic support from the executive of the Australian and New Zealand Theological Schools, who voted a \$2000 subsidy towards its publication. The executive of the ANZTLA likewise decided to support it with a subsidy of the same amount. These two contributions will ensure that students and researchers have this publication at a very reasonable price. It is expected that the initial printing of 1000 copies will sell very quickly.

One of the matters of unfinished business was the election of an Assistant Editor for the *Newsletter*. We were very fortunate to have Judith James (St Marks, Canberra) accept this position. Along with Editor Irene Mills, she has made a very valuable contribution to the work of the Association. It is pleasing to note that these two have maintained the very high standard set by their predecessors.

One of the disappointing features of the year has been our inability to bring the planned 5-year cumulation of the *Australasian religion index* to fruition, despite many hours of painstaking work by the staff of the Joint Theological Library. They have made good progress on the author authority file, but, for technical reasons that lie outside their hands, they have not been able to work on a subject authority file. Indeed, the immensity of this task is such that it threatens the future of the whole project.

It was also a great disappointment to receive notice of the resignation of Dr Gary Gorman from the position of Coordinating Editor of ARI. Gary was the founder of ARI and the Coordinating Editor for the first eleven issues. It was his research and

his address to the 1987 Melbourne conference which alerted members to the need for such a tool for research based on the work of local authors, and it was his enthusiasm for the project which led, firstly, to a pilot project and, secondly, to the decision in 1988 to undertake the publication of *ARI* as a permanent project of the Association. Unfortunately, together with the resignation of Gary, we also lose the services of Dr Lyn Gorman in the editing process. Her knowledge of the field and her outstanding commitment to the project have been of inestimable benefit to the project since its inception. We owe them both a huge debt of gratitude.

As we progress into our tenth year as an association, there will no doubt be much further development of automation in individual libraries. As you plan and implement such projects, I would once again urge you to keep in mind the information needs of other theological libraries and, indeed, the non-theological library community. Such consideration would seem to imply the utmost effort to be involved in such networks as may be available and, in particular, the National Bibliographic Networks of our two countries. While it is not yet clear what the full implications of the Distributed National Collection in both places will be for our individual libraries, it is obvious that the national Bibliographic Network is the lynch-pin of the concept. It is just as apparent also that each individual library should see itself as, to some extent and in some degree, serving the national - perhaps even the international - interest. Basic to such a concept for us is the maximising of the national collection in the literature of theology and related fields and the facilitation of the sharing of such resources.

In 1995, we look forward to celebrating the tenth anniversary of the Association in the city in which its first conference was held and its constitution approved. During the intervening year, I would challenge all members to think creatively of ways of demonstrating the degree of maturity appropriate to a ten-year old organisation.

(Revd) Trevor Zweck
President