



THE LIBRARY BOARD OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

THE LIBRARY SERVICE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

6th Annual Report of the Board, 1957-58

THE LIBRARY BOARD OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Members:		
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Mr. T. H. Roberts, M.A	 (10;	9)
Dr. T. L. Robertson, M.A., Ph.D., Dip.Ed.	 (10;	5)
Mr. A. H. Rushton, J.P. (c)	 (2;	2)
Miss M. E. Wood, M.A., A.L.A	 (10;	9)

- (a) Appointed 7th August, 1957.
- (b) Retired 30th November, 1957.
- (c) Appointed 17th April, 1958.

The figures in brackets indicate possible and actual attendances at meetings of the Board.

State Librarian:

F. A. Sharr, B.A., F.L.A.

Communications should be addressed to: The State Librarian, 3 Francis Street, Perth. Telephone 28 2461.

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OME months ago, the head of a small firm came to the State Library to find out if there was any machine to do a job which he was then doing laboriously by hand. He was given full details of a suitable machine and the techniques involved in its use. No such machine existed in Western Australia. He imported the machine from overseas and within six months had doubled his turnover. This resulted in his giving employment to nine more staff directly, needing two more delivery trucks, and buying substantial, additional quantities of other supplies made locally. He has also completed a £6,000 extension to his premises and is contemplating further expansion. All this arose from one out of the 17,000 enquiries made at the State Library during the year; plenty of other examples could be quoted. This type of service is not confined to the metropolitan area but is equally available at country libraries associated with the Board.

A public library service is often thought of as mainly recreational or vaguely cultural in aim. This is not true. An important function of a public library is to stimulate general prosperity and employment, as this

example shows.

This year has been one of steady progress and consolidation, after the somewhat hectic pace of development in the previous three years. Eight new public libraries have been established, bringing the total to thirty, from Exmouth Gulf in the north to Esperance in the south-east. There has been a steady increase in the demand for special books for study purposes in country and suburban libraries through the Request and Information Service. A slight reduction has been made in the number of local authorities on the waiting list for libraries, but the situation in this regard is little changed from last year, when the Board expressed grave concern at the long delays involved.

The following figures indicate the increase of activity in the State Library since the Board became responsible for it in December, 1955:—

Use of books in the month of June-

1956 3,821 1958 11,836

The Board has given consideration to the future needs of the Head-quarters and the State Library in terms of premises. Briefly, the position in the State Library is that within two years all available book storage space in the present building will be full. The Board will then be faced with the need for alternative accommodation or for ruthless discarding of valuable existing books and periodicals to make room for additions. The out-dated and inappropriate books taken over from the former Public Library have already largely been removed.

There is seating for some 250 readers in the State Library. During the year, 50 additional chairs were purchased because all existing seats were frequently occupied. If the somewhat remarkable increase of public use continues, additional accommodation for readers will be required within

the forseeable future.

The Board's Headquarters cannot, without serious prejudice, be separated from the State Library.

There is not space on the present site for extensions of adequate size to

the present building.

For all these reasons, and others, the Board has requested the Government to consider the erection of a new building for Headquarters and the State Library. The present building would then become available for use by another body.

The membership of the Board remained unchanged during the year except for the appointment of Mr. H. G. Cant in place of Mr. T. G. Davies, who resigned towards the end of last year; the retirement of Mr. A. F. Noonan, whose term of office had expired; and the appointment of Mr. A. H. Rushton. Mr. Noonan was an original member of the Board and its Vice Chairman in 1954-56.

The Board warmly welcomed the decision of the Commonwealth Parliament to make gifts to public libraries an allowable deduction for income

tax and to exempt them from estate duty.

Perhaps the most significant event during the year in the field of Australian education was the publication of the report of the Committee on Australian Universities set up by the Prime Minister (the "Murray Committee"). Among other things, the report emphasises not only the acute shortage of men in the professions and technologies upon which the development of the Australian community depends, but also the equally acute shortage of educational facilities.

The public library service can make a very significant—and relatively inexpensive—contribution towards filling these needs in three ways:—

by assisting those who have left school without matriculation to qualify for University entrance;

by supplying the books needed by country students who have the drive and initiative to read for a degree externally;

by enabling those of more mature age, or who cannot enter the University, to broaden their minds and to study modern techniques in their occupations.

All these accord well with the by no means out-dated Australian tradition of self-reliance and self-help.

At least some of those who graduate at the University, when they take up employment in the country or in the metropolitan area, wish to apply the skills they have acquired as students and to keep themselves professionally up to date. For these purposes, they need access to information on current developments in their fields, and turn to their public library. The substantial increase of university activity and enrolments (estimated as 120 per cent. in ten years) will therefore increase, still further, the need for, and demand on, the library service of the State. It is the public library service which meets the needs of past students of the University.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

The books have been provided for eight new public libraries during the year (serving ten local authorities) at:—

Balingup Yalgoo
Goomalling Armadale
Bruce Rock Carnarvon
Cue Carnamah

In addition, a children's section has been added to the Preston District Public Library at Donnybrook and some 2,100 additional non-fiction books supplied to the Evan Davies Civic Library, Fremantle, consequent upon a re-assessment of the population served from that library.

The total number of public libraries in the service is now 30, serving 37 local authority areas which are listed in the Appendix. There is, however, still a waiting list of 28 local authorities, some of which will require more than one library, the City of Perth and Perth Road Board for example.

Particular mention may perhaps be made of the Gascoyne Public Library at Carnarvon. It is jointly supported by Carnarvon Municipality, Gascoyne-Minilya Road Board and Upper Gascoyne Road Board, and serves 45,000 square miles. This may well be the largest area in the world served by one library. Through the courtesy of the Royal Flying Doctor Service, the librarian is able to give a monthly book talk to the outback stations, while the mail contractors have agreed to carry books out to the stations without charge.

A new and experimental development has been the establishment of a centre at Nullagine. The total population of the Nullagine Road Board is 224 and its area 93,000 square miles. There are reported to be six families living actually in Nullagine itself and they have been supplied, in view of their isolation, with 120 books in two standard boxes. One box is exchanged at a time whenever the local people so wish.

A welcome development this year has been the decision taken by several local authorities to erect new buildings specifically designed as libraries. One, at Armadale, was opened in May, another at Scarborough will be opened early in 1958-59. Three country local authorities have instructed their architects to prepare plans and specifications.

After careful consideration of experience in Western Australia to date and bearing in mind overseas practice, the Board has determined certain minimum practicable standards for public library provision as a guide for local authorities. Of these, perhaps the most important is that except in very small country towns or very large metropolitan libraries, the minimum area for a lending library, excluding offices, etc., should be 170 square feet per 1,000 of population served, with a recommended area of 200 square feet when a new building is to be designed.

The Request and Information Service has continued to be well used. Following the appointment of a junior assistant in the Bibliographical Centre, and certain other changes, requests for special books have been satisfied more quickly in the latter part of the year.

One local librarian carried out a check and found that over 80 per cent. of requests for books already in stock were supplied within three weeks. The credit for this not unsatisfactory result goes as much to local

librarians all over the State who deal with inter-loan requests promptly

and efficiently, as to the Headquarters staff.

Requests received from public libraries numbered 3,968 as against 3,426 last year. Some idea of the type of book asked for in country libraries may be obtained from the following titles, the first fifteen which happened to be received on the Monday of the last week in the financial year. A total of 65 was received on that day, which makes the publication of the complete list impracticable.

Henson Binoculars, telescopes and telescopic sights.

V-Five Association of Gymnastics and tumbling.

America

Douglas Hydroponics.

Boff Gardening without a garden.

Teresa, Saint .. A life of Saint Teresa.

Schreiner .. Story of an African Farm.

Beaton .. It gives me great pleasure.

A book on the origins of nursery rhymes.

Schock How to build small boats.

Wenham Antiques from A to Z.

Butts Assumptions underlying Australian education.

Rusk The doctrines of the great educators.

Lunn Martin Luther.

Life of John Calvin.

Western Australia . . The "Stephenson" plan for the metropolitan area.

Of these 15 requests, 14 were satisfied from stock and one was borrowed

from the W. J. Rooney Library, Education Department.

All but a small proportion of requests are, of course, satisfied from the Board's existing stock or by ordering the book concerned to meet the request. It is, nevertheless, the Board's policy to try to supply every book asked for, however unusual, to any reader, however remote. Other libraries in this State and in the Eastern States have lent a significant number of books for country readers and the Board wishes to express its grateful appreciation for their courtesy in doing so. Except in most unusual circumstances, no request is made inter-State for a book which is in print and therefore can be purchased.

A number of expressions of appreciation of the Board's service have

been received, of which perhaps two may be quoted.

From the Secretary, The Road Board Association.

"At a meeting of my Executive Committee held on 26th September last I was instructed to advise you that my Executive Committee carried a vote of appreciation of the excellent work of your good self and the Board."

From the Commissioner, Kwinana Road Board.

"The Library is the least costly and most satisfying of all our public services."

DEPARTMENTAL ACTIVITIES

HEADQUARTERS

Book Selection

James Hammond, F.L.A., Chief Assistant Librarian.

The continued expansion of the Board's services has made it more than ever necessary to maintain a good supply of the books which form the basic stock of any library system. Each new library, as it opens, needs not only an attractive selection of current books, but a representative body of works published over the last decade or so. This means that the circulation stock has to be continually replenished with standard and semi-standard works.

This is not always easy. Accepted standard works go out of print and suitable substitutes have to be found.

The earlier books of a popular author may no longer be available in hard back editions and recourse has then to be made to "paperbacks," which need to be bound before they are suitable for issue. Among the new books it is difficult to find sufficient worth-while fiction. Of the 15,000 new books published in England in 1957, rather less than 15 per cent. consisted of novels, many of which were of no real value.

Most of the libraries for boys and girls are being well-used. A standard list of some 60 books has been drawn up with which all children should have the opportunity to become acquainted and two or more copies of each of the selected titles, according to the size of the library, have been, or will be, supplied to each children's collection. It is felt that every child should always have a good chance of finding a number of the children's classics available on the shelf for his selection.

Some revision of the State Library stock has been carried out during the year, but this is a slow process. There has not been staff available to conduct the necessary bibliographical surveys, while many of the books known to be needed are out of print and may only be acquired over the years as copies become available on the secondhand market or through duplicate exchange services. Purchase of those which are in print is to some extent, limited by finance.

A precedent has been set in the Western Australian collection by the purchase of the late Miss Mollie Skinner's literary estate. This covers her work in manuscript form and shows her novels in various stages of revision; most useful and fascinating material for the literary student. Letters from D. H. Lawrence to Miss Skinner are included in the collection.

The Australian collection in the State Library has been strengthened during the year by the addition of the works of many early Australian writers. Many of these books were published only in the paperback editions of the "N.S.W. Railway Bookstall series" and their very survival is a matter of good fortune. The Board has also pursued its policy of buying examples of Australian fine printing. Among the books added in this category were Douglas Stewart's "Shipwreck" issued by the Shepherd Press in a limited edition of 100 copies illustrated by Norman Lindsay; and Hardy Wilson's "Old Colonial Architecture," a very handsome volume which has long been noted as outstanding for the beauty of its illustrations.

Accessions Section

Florence McKeand, A.L.A., Librarian.

After concentrating last year on the re-stocking of the Library of Business, Science and Technology, and the Information Centre, the attention of Accessions Section swung back to the lending service. A feature of this year's work has been the acquisition of books for children as more libraries are now catering for children as well as adults. Checking of bibliographies, publishers' catalogues, and other sources was an important part of the work in order to get as wide a range of titles as possible in the best editions available. Some attention, too, was given to selecting titles not necessarily written for children, but likely to be enjoyed by the adolescent-teenager.

To meet the need for greater throughput, a new principle of metered flow was developed in the latter part of last year and has been in successful operation throughout this year. There are some 34 separate operations involved in adding books to stock. Some are carried out in Accessions and some in Catalogue Section. For some, the title (without regard to number of copies) is the unit of throughput, for others each volume is the unit. Maximum throughput of the whole system of operations can be achieved only if each staff member is equally loaded and working at optimum capacity. This requires an accurate balance to be maintained between the three main classes of book—non-fiction, fiction and junior—and between single and multiple copies in each class. In addition it is, of course, important that the books coming through should be those immediately required. Books of somewhat different types are required for four separate needs: stock for new libraries; new books to refresh existing lending libraries; maintenance and stock revision of the State Library; books required to meet readers' requests.

To meet these various, and to some extent, conflicting requirements, books are now put through in accurately balanced weekly batches designed to ensure that each of the four needs are met, and that the optimum proportion of single and multiple copies in each of the three main classes is maintained. As the needs of the service are continually changing, considerable care and forward planning is required in making up the batches, otherwise, for example, not enough children's books might be available when they were wanted for a new library, or one sequence of operations be overloaded and cause a bottleneck.

The result of the adoption of metered flow has been that the throughput has been increased by 44 per cent. with no increase in staff. This has been made possible by the ready teamwork of all members of the Section and the co-operation received from Catalogue and Circulation Sections and the State Library staff.

There is an internationally accepted formula for determining the number of staff required to carry out the functions performed by Accessions and Catalogue Sections. It gives a total of 30; the staff employed in Western Australia number 12.

This system (which is saving some £4,000 per annum) could not have been introduced but for the enlargement of, and improvement to, the Board's premises last year.

Increasing benefit is being derived from participation in various interlibrary duplicate exchange services. These have as their object the exchange between libraries of unwanted for wanted material. In one month recently, books were despatched to Turkey, Fiji and Mexico and received from Zanzibar, Swadlincote and Atlanta, Georgia. Most use is made of the Commonwealth National Library Clearing Centre and the British National Book Centre; it is anticipated that more business will in future be done with the United States Book Exchange. Through these exchanges, valuable out of print standard works and missing parts required to complete runs of periodicals have been obtained.

The number of periodicals regularly received now amounts to 1,657, including 265 which are received under copyright. This means that during the year the periodicals and copyright officer checks 34,280 parts. He is also responsible for the receipt and checking of 677 annuals and serials including 116 copyright items, and for British Government publications received under International Exchange. He receives and distributes to the correct government departments the publications of the United States government received through the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. The State Library staff now record the material received by the Board from this source.

A large number of publications have been presented to the Board. Some were rare West Australian items, some the publications of societies or industrial concerns, others normal, published material. One gift of exceptional munificence was a carefully selected collection of 1,050 volumes, portraying contemporary life in the United States, received from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

To list all donors would exceed the bounds of this Report, but to all of them the Board wishes to express its very sincere thanks and appreciation.

Catalogue Section

C. L. Drake, M.A., A.L.A., Chief Cataloguer.

Taking the year under review as a whole, there was less emphasis on the cataloguing of books for the State Library than during the previous 12 months. The effect of the greater proportion of books intended for circulation is to be seen in the figures of books catalogued during the year. These came to 41,197 volumes, representing 9,260 titles new to the stock, compared with 28,584 volumes and 11,191 titles during 1956-57. There was, as can be seen, a marked increase in the number of volumes handled accompanied by an actual decrease in the number of new titles catalogued, and the ratio of volumes to new titles rose from 2.55 to 4.45.

The decrease in the number of new titles was not due only to the change in the character of the books treated. During the first half of the year the rate of cataloguing titles was about the same as in the previous 12 months. After the New Year, however, two weeks' production was lost while the State Library catalogue was being re-arranged. During the last three months of the year, a higher proportion of books for circulation stock was handled, including many which were additional copies of titles already in stock, with the result that the average number of copies per new title increased. The number of titles catalogued was of necessity held down

to the number of volumes that could be processed in a given time by Accessions Section.

Time gained by this artificial reduction of output was used to accelerate the revision of the printed catalogue. Revision of the catalogue was continuous throughout the year, an average of about four pages per week being maintained. This rate was sufficient to keep pace with the growth of the catalogue page by page; that is to say, no leaf, or pair of pages, to which new entries sufficient to fill a further page were ready to be added was left unrevised. But in order to keep the catalogue as a whole reasonably up to date, this pace of revision is too slow and needs to be doubled in order to carry out a complete revision of the catalogue each year, which appears to be a desirable objective. Hitherto, revision of the catalogue has been, as it were, a by-product of the cataloguing process; it is reaching the stage of being a job in itself. In comparison with the 60 pages of the first issue there are now more than 400, which by modification of the type, have been given an increased capacity of 25 per cent. This growth has added considerably to the task of re-editing the old pages (for as the number of entries grows, the existing classes have to be split up and re-arranged in smaller groups) and of re-typing and re-printing them, even though the number of new entries to be added each year may not have increased very much.

Lists of books on farming have been sent periodically, as in the past, to the Journal of the Department of Agriculture and during the present year a list of books of interest to Local Government officers has been sent quarterly to "Municeps," the Journal of the Institute of Municipal Administration.

Circulation Section

A. T. Pugh, A.L.A., Librarian.

Circulation Section is responsible for the supply of books to public libraries and for maintaining records of the whereabouts of every book in the lending service. This involves: the selection and despatch of the initial stock for new libraries; the maintenance of a regular programme of exchanges with libraries already established; the organisation of direct loans, or interloans, between libraries in connection with the Request and Information Service; and the recording of all book movements in the stock and location records.

19,485 volumes were supplied to new libraries and to Fremantle Library in augmentation of its stock. The exchange programme involved the inward or outward movement of 46,000 volumes. 1,356 loans were arranged between libraries.

An increasing number of local librarians are visiting Circulation Section to select the books for their own exchanges. The librarians of suburban libraries are, of course, expected to carry out their own book selection; the spread of this practice, at least partially, to country libraries, is very much to be welcomed.

Before each new library is established, the person who will act as librarian, is required to attend at Headquarters for a period of training. This is organised by Circulation Section, which has received ready help and co-operation from metropolitan public libraries, and from the other Sections of Headquarters and the State Library.

A display of books on various aspects of local government work was arranged for the biennial conference of the Road Board Association in 1957.

The lease of the house in Havelock Street occupied by Circulation Section was renewed by the Board until April, 1960. The premises served the Board well in the initial stages of its work, but it is clear that their retention after 1960 is likely to become unsatisfactory and uneconomical if the service continues to expand. It would be in every way preferable for Circulation Section to be in juxtaposition with the rest of Headquarters, and in a building designed for the purpose.

In January, 1958, Mr. W. F. Chape resigned from the service of the Board to become City Librarian of Perth. Mr. A. T. Pugh was appointed

in his place as Librarian, Circulation Section.

STATE LIBRARY

The State Library is the reference division of the Library Service of Western Australia. It is divided into four subject libraries and two centres.

The Board has been seriously concerned during the year with the difficulty of recruiting young staff of the requisite quality for the State Library. Clearly, a first class service cannot be given by second class staff, and the Board does not conceive its duty as the provision of a second rate service. The salaries and prospects in librarianship are not unsatisfactory—by the standards of the public service generally; the work is interesting and socially satisfying. It would appear that parents and young men in Western Australia have not yet recognised the existence of librarianship as a professional career. Until they do so, the present difficulty is likely to persist.

The number of books used by readers was 121,902 (72,796 last year). 17,350 information enquiries were answered, examples of which are quoted later in this Report.

4,160 pages of photocopies or micro-film were produced at readers' requests (2,745 last year).

The J. S. Battye Library and State Archives

Mollie Lukis, B.A., Librarian and Archivist.

This has been a year of consolidation, during which the staff has come to feel at home with the combined printed and manuscript material brought together in the previous year to form the J. S. Battye Library of West Australian History, in which readers can have access to all available sources for the study of the history and literature of the State. New activities, such as the indexing of selected country newspapers, and of the current year's parliamentary papers, statutes and regulations have become part of the accepted routine. Gaps in series of government publications held in the Library have been filled where possible, if necessary by microfilming copies available only in departments. Duplicate sets of important publications, held in reserve, have been almost completed.

A number of valuable additions, including some rare early editions of works by local authors, have been made to the Western Australian

literature collection started last year, and many of the gaps have been filled. The acquisition by the Board of the literary manuscripts of the late Miss Mollie Skinner was a notable event, and this was followed by the gift of the manuscripts of his two published novels by Mr. F. B. Vickers. It is hoped that other West Australian authors will follow this example and deposit their manuscripts in the Library.

Good progress has been made with the microfilming of local newspapers, the copying of files of "The West Australian" and its predecessors having now been completed from 1833 to 1907. The practice, commenced five years ago, of microfilming the current "The West Australian" while the file is in mint condition, has been continued and the 1957 issues are now all on film. The camera is also used to copy valuable private records lent for the purpose by their owners. An outstanding example was the Clifton Papers, a collection dealing mainly with the Western Australian Company settlement at Australiand. Included in it are diaries of Marshall Waller Clifton for the years 1840-1861, letterbooks from 1840-1859, and a quantity of miscellaneous papers relating to the affairs of the Company.

Among notable donations received during the year were: the records of the De Grey Station, presented by Mr. I. Edgar; a large collection of letters, memoranda and other papers of Lord Forrest, 1900-1918, with 15 volumes of press cuttings, presented by West Australian Newspapers Ltd.; and a collection of legal documents, agreements, mortgages, probate papers, etc., 1829-1850, received from Stone James & Co., solicitors.

Transfers of records from government departments have continued to increase; records occupying 269 feet of shelving have been added to stock this year, as compared with an average of 100 feet per annum over the last five years. One of the most interesting accessions came from the Engineering Drawing Office of the Public Works Department, which transferred some 300 plans of buildings and other public works proposed or constructed in Western Australia between 1832 and 1894. A large series of photographs no longer required for publicity purposes, but useful historically, was received from the W.A. Tourist and Publicity Bureau.

Of outstanding importance for research students, however, was the decision of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly to authorise the transfer of papers laid upon the table of the House in the Legislative Assembly from the First Parliament following the grant of representative government in 1890, to 1940. Many of these papers are in manuscript or typescript and are possibly the only copies in existence.

In order to examine files for disposal, staff were required to visit Government Departments and, in some instances, to make a number of visits involving considerable time. Requests for permission to destroy records, entailing such examination, came from the following departments during the year: Chief Secretary's, Factories Inspection Branch of the Department of Labour, Local Government, Main Roads, Metropolitan Water Supply, Public Health, Public Works, Registrar-General's, and W.A. Government Railways. As a result of this co-operation with the various Government agencies, material of administrative or historical value was deposited in the State Archives and departments were then able to seek the Governor's approval for the destruction of the remaining records.

Probably the most notable advance made during the year has resulted from the emphasis on the collection of local records; that is, records of a particular area, kept by district branches or agencies of Government departments, by local governing authorities or by associations, societies and private individuals. Entry into this field has been greatly facilitated by the Board's activities in country districts, which have provided a means of stimulating interest in the subject and encouraging local authorities to deposit their records for safe-keeping. Visits have been made by Battye Library staff (in company with officers travelling on library business) to the following towns: Cue, Yalgoo, Mt. Magnet, Southern Cross, Norseman, Esperance, Ravensthorpe, Quairading and Kalgoorlie, and have resulted in transfers of important records from Government departments or local authorities. Of particular interest were the records found at Cue—a comprehensive series covering all phases of the development of the town and the surrounding area, from the time when the Murchison goldfield was proclaimed in 1891.

The Library has continued to serve a great variety of readers—officers of the Government seeking information for administrative purposes; students of all ages, from primary school children to post-graduate students of the University; authors, journalists, radio feature writers, genealogists and antiquaries, with interests ranging from shipwrecks to postmarks. An increasing number of enquiries are answered by post, many of them from research workers in other States or overseas who have come to recognise the Battye Library as a willing and reliable source of information on West Australian history.

Library of Business, Science and Technology

Norman Horrocks, F.L.A., Librarian

This library was inaugurated 18 months ago to help business and industry in the State by providing information on all aspects of science, technology and management.

Few Western Australian firms or organisations are large enough to warrant their own research or development staff. Yet work in their fields is being carried out in the Eastern States, and overseas. The practical applications of much of this work are published in the trade and professional press, and with the aid of the periodicals taken by the Library, any businessman or manufacturer, here, can keep abreast of the latest developments in his particular line. By this means an enterprising individual can often be first in the field locally with an idea that has been tested and proved successful elsewhere.

A striking example has been described at the beginning of this Report. There are other successful and profitable enterprises now flourishing in the State, the ideas for which originated in, or were supported by information taken from, the Library's books and periodicals. All these ventures are contributing to fuller employment and the greater development of the State.

Although there is a good range of periodical indexes and abstracts in the Bibliographical Centre, their exploitation is often limited by the lack of back files of periodicals. Frequently, in the solution of current enquiries, reference has to be made to articles published a number of years ago. Useful additions to the files of journals have been received through inter-library exchanges. A circular to other libraries and business firms in the State asking them not to discard unwanted journals, but to present them to the Board evoked a generous response and the Board is very grateful

for the donors' co-operation.

Most of the current stock of technical books was specially bought before this Library opened in December, 1956. Certain standard works which were lacking from the original stock have now been added; for example: Glazebrook's "Dictionary of Applied Physics" in five volumes, first published in 1922-23, and Guenther's "The Essential Oils" in six volumes, published in 1948-52. The Library has also received the first volumes of several other important works whose publication commenced this year. Two examples are: firstly, the Decennial Index to "Chemical Abstracts" for the period 1947-56, to be completed in 19 volumes, which is the key to the contents of over 7,000 periodicals dealing with chemistry, published all over the world. Secondly, the first three of a projected fourvolume second edition of "The Colour Index" have arrived. Issued by the (British) Society of Dyers and Colourists and the American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists, it gives full technical data on dyes and colouring agents. The first edition was published as long ago as 1924 and this new edition is likely to remain the standard work for many years.

The increasing importance to Australia of the potential export markets in India and the South-East Asian countries needs no emphasis. As an aid to the business firms interested in these markets the Library has joined the Indian Standards Institution. All Indian Standard Specifications are now being received and a firm tendering for a contract there can ensure that its products conform to requirements. The Library already takes Australian, British, and many American Standards.

The Library is equipped to deal with technical enquiries of all kinds. To give some idea of the range of information available, a few recent enquiries are given below. None of them is of a confidential nature.

Details of a suction test to measure the comparative efficiency of vacuum cleaners.

The latest available figures for the heat of formation of ferric oxide.

Details of the Dr. Angus Smith solution. (This was a paint primer patented in England in 1848.)

Information on the type of lens used in a submarine periscope.

Recipes for the different flavours to be used in milk shakes.

The effect on the human body of working in cold-storage plants. The most efficient way to use a scythe.

Pictures of bearded ladies to illustrate a medical lecture.

Not all these enquiries came from Perth or the metropolitan area. The services of the Library are available to anyone in the State. Any enquiry received will be dealt with as fully as possible by post. It is noticeable, however, that the establishment of a public library in association with the Board usually increases the number of enquiries from its district. This is understandable. The existence of a public library locally brings

home to people that there is an organisation in the State that is able and willing to help them. Through the enthusiasm and co-operation of local librarians these enquiries are now channelled to the appropriate specialist library or centre at the State Library. For example: a shopkeeper in a country town wanted to break new ground by manufacturing a certain article. He asked for information at his local library. His enquiry was passed through Headquarters to this Library. He was told by letter the materials he would need, their cost in Western Australia, and how soon he could expect delivery. Books and photocopies of magazine articles explaining the processes involved were sent to his local library for his use.

A small but well-used section of the Library is that dealing with motor cars. With the high proportion of cars per head of population in Western Australia, this might be expected. The Library now has over 100 workshop manuals and is trying to add to their number. The majority of these manuals, however, having been bought within the last 18 months, deal with current models, and it is difficult to obtain those for older cars. Anyone who has an old manual no longer required, can be assured of its being put to good use by presenting it to the Library.

It was always envisaged that the Library of Business, Science and Technology would act as an informal clearing centre for information within the State. To this end, close co-operation is maintained with other libraries in Western Australia. During the year, help and advice in the organisation of libraries has been given to certain Government departments, and to several business firms and organisations. In addition, the librarians of the Government Chemical Laboratories and the Kalgoorlie School of Mines have both spent some time working in the Library to acquaint themselves more fully with its resources.

It is not enough that a library should collect information. It should play a more active role and bring its resources to the attention of those best able to benefit from them. One way of doing this is to compile and publish lists of books on specific topics. There is a danger that unless these deal with carefully chosen subjects of known interest, they will merely add to the ever-increasing flow of printed material which arrives on every executive's desk. This year, the Library has published only two reading lists. One was at the request of the local branch of the Institution of Automotive and Aeronautical Engineers and the other at the request of the Institute of Personnel Management. Both were circulated by the societies themselves to their members.

The service to business and industry is, of course, free and completely confidential. It is available not only to those who can visit the Library, but to anyone who can write a letter or pick up a telephone.

Library of Social Sciences, Philosophy and Religion

Michael Yelland, B.A., A.L.A.

The first duty of the staff of a reference library is to help readers and enquirers to find exactly the material or information they want. But this cannot be done unless the books, periodicals, pamphlets, etc., which make up the library are organised for use. It is of no use to have "just the very thing" if it cannot be found—and quickly.

The organisation of the material in this Library which is both extensive and varied, has been the principal preoccupation of the staff during the year, in what little time was left after the requirements of readers had been met.

Despite shortage of staff some progress has been made in re-organising a vast accumulation of material in the pamphlet stack, which had hitherto consisted of a roughly classified sequence containing monographs, serials and some periodicals. About three-quarters of this sequence has been sorted, and about 1,000 monograph pamphlets have been classified and added to the pamphlet collection. Some periodicals and serials worthy of preservation are being added to stock.

On the other hand, it has been possible to make very little progress in the systematic revision and strengthening of the bookstock, which is so

badly needed.

The State Library is a depository library, one of four in Australia, for the publications of the United Nations, and receives also selections from the publications of some of its specialised agencies (notably UNESCO) and of other international bodies. In addition, most of the publications of the governments of Australia, the United States of America and Great Britain are received. At present, the staff are able to cope with the dayto-day influx of this material, but there is still a large backlog of unorganised United States and UNESCO documents. However, it has been possible, during this year, to make plans for their future exploitation.

The value of government publications of all sorts in answering everyday enquiries cannot be over-emphasised. Sample enquiries answered with

their aid this year included:

What are the rights of U.S. Indians to minerals and petroleum found in reservations?

Figures for production and export of talc, and its consumption by particular industries in Australia.

The number of deaths from diphtheria in Britain in 1956.

What foreign travel grants are available to Australians? Details of the 4-H movement (junior farmers in the U.S.A.).

What legislation is there in the Eastern States on blood tests for drunken drivers?

When were three towns in south-western Queensland first gazetted? The Board has been glad to receive donations, some of which have filled important gaps in the stock, from the Parliamentary Library, the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics (W.A. Branch), Father Hernandez, of the Benedictine Community at New Norcia, West Australian Newspapers Ltd., A.M.P. Society and the Geological Survey Branch.

Many enquiries in this Library come from students preparing essays and assignments on topics ranging from everyday life in ancient Egypt to juvenile delinquency in the U.S.S.R. and from debaters seeking talkingpoints on controversial subjects. In addition to serving these constant companions, the staff are always to be found answering enquiries on a wide variety of subjects, such as:

> Details of the adoption of the Centigrade thermometer in India. Information about the Tasmanian apple festival.

Where is there an iron obelisk that does not rust? Information about community developments in Israel. Information about the Durban riots of 1949.

The names of the ships composing the fleet with which the transport "Matilda" sailed in 1791.

The staff arranged displays in the entrance lobby on the following topics:—

" Malaya."

" Party Politics."

" Indonesia."

"Costume."

" India."

Library of Literature and the Arts

Ronald Wright, B.A.

It is difficult, in the confines of a limited space, to give an adequate picture of the many book requests and subject enquiries answered by the Library during the year. The following give some indication of their range:—

A history of Gosfield Hall in Essex, England. Material on the subject of street furniture.

Review of the gramophone record "Fete Polonaise," by Chabrier. Value of the "Smallest Dictionary in the World," a miniature edition of Dr. Johnson's work.

Data concerning Travellers' Homes.

Design and furnishing of a modern cafeteria.

An interesting function of the Library is the identification of rare books and antiques. While often the items brought in are of insignificant value or interest, this is by no means always the case and did not apply, for example, to a rare edition of A. Berquin's verse translations of Rousseau's "Pygmalion" engraved with vignettes. A painting brought in for appraisal by a lucky purchaser at an auction was identified as having been executed by J. W. Curtis in 1878. This artist exhibited with Louis Buvelot and others as a representative Australian artist at the Philadelphia Exhibition of 1876.

Photographs of an unusual antique were forwarded to the Library for identification. It was thought by the owner in Northam to be a Continental praying chair and was reputed to be 150 years old. The chair was beaded and it was believed that the pattern was that of the Beaufort coat of arms. It was ascertained from Paul's "An Ordinary of Scottish Arms" that the arms were those of Martin Barr of Worcester, granted to him in 1825. Further search involved writing to the editor of the "Connoisseur" in London, from whom it was learnt that the chair was designed by Richard Charles, a free lance furniture designer about 1860. The design was reproduced in a book of his furniture designs called "The Cabinetmaker's Monthly Journal of Design (1860)." This information was forwarded to the enquirer who was delighted to know these accurate details of a chair widely admired for its beauty of design and construction.

Throughout the year, departments such as the Town Planning Department, the State Housing Commission, the Publications Branch of the Education Department and the Technical College have had recourse to the Library's books and services. As one Government officer expressed it, his department seemed to have "found" the Library. Increasing numbers of students discover the Library material valuable in completing their assignments while numbers of general readers use its book stock for their requirements for information.

Bibliographical Centre

F. J. Balnaves, B.A., A.L.A.

During January when use of the Library by readers was at a minimum, the opportunity was taken to make a major re-organisation of the State Library catalogue.

Formerly, the catalogue, following accepted Australian practice, was a dictionary catalogue in which entries for authors, titles and subject were arranged in one alphabetical sequence. The dictionary catalogue is widely used in America. It has been found in several of the more progressive American libraries recently that it is more convenient for use if divided into separated author and subject catalogues.

The decision was therefore taken to introduce this new form, known as the divided catalogue, to the State Library and at the same time, to make three further changes.

All the subject entries from the main catalogue in Accessions Section were removed from that catalogue and inter-filed into the State Library subject catalogue so that readers can now survey not only the books added to the State Library since 1955, but also all non-fiction titles in circulation stock.

The entries in the subject catalogue have been re-arranged in inverse chronological order of publication (instead of the traditional author order) so that the first card seen by a reader in any subject represents the latest book published on the subject. This arrangement not only suits the reader better, but will enable systematic "weeding" of the subject catalogue to be carried out in the future and so help to limit its growth. The author catalogue will not, of course, be similarly weeded.

A new technique was adopted whereby each subject is indicated by a separate guide card instead of by the typing of the subject entry on to the top of each individual card. This involved the preparation and insertion of some 15,000 guide cards, but will in future eliminate the typing of subject entries on individual cards and will afford a small but significant saving of cost, as well as making the catalogue easier to use.

Shortage of staff in the State Library brought the re-cataloguing of the former Public Library's stock to a standstill for some months, but some small progress has been made and a total of 6,402 volumes have been re-catalogued.

The Request and Information Service has shown development during the year. 4,998 requests were received (4,134 last year), an increase of 21 per cent. 93 per cent. were satisfied. 83 per cent. (4,154 volumes) were supplied from the Board's own stock, 3.3 per cent. (166 volumes) were borrowed within the State, 3 per cent. (152 volumes) from other States, 154 photocopies were obtained interstate or from overseas to meet 3.1 per cent., while three works were borrowed from overseas.

243 volumes were lent to other libraries, intra- and interstate.

The number of books borrowed from other libraries, particularly interstate, and of photocopies obtained from other libraries, has shown a large increase. Last year they were too few to warrant recording. Books which are in print and recreational books are not borrowed interstate. This increase clearly shows the increased public demand for advanced, highly technical, or scholarly material.

A number of librarians of public libraries visited the Bibliographical Centre during the year, and were given a practical demonstration of the functioning of the Request and Information Service. Time spent on this training has proved to be well worth while and an extension of the practice, perhaps in the form of a week-end school, would result in a more thorough exploitation of the potentialities of the service.

The Bibliographical Centre, as an agency for arranging inter-library loans within and outside the State, is becoming increasingly popular, and many of the smaller libraries in the State have availed themselves of this service, and of the help which the Centre can give in providing bibliographical information.

The Union Catalogue of Periodicals and the Outlier Union Catalogue continue to expand. Ninety-seven libraries are now co-operating in these activities.

The Australian Bibliographical Centre in Canberra began the compilation of a summary of Australian bibliographies and bibliographical services, and of a union list of newspapers. The State Bibliographical Centre supplied lists of bibliographies in all the major Western Australian libraries (except the University Library, which made its own return), and of holdings of newspapers at the State Library.

Information Centre

Rex Price

The function of the Information Centre is to answer general and commercial questions which do not require any substantial search. There seems to be some confusion in the public mind on this. All sections of the State Library provide information service, indeed the essential characteristic of a reference library is to give information.

The Information Centre, however, seems to have caught the public's attention and many telephone enquirers ask for the Centre when they really need to be put through to one of the subject libraries. This causes delay, which can be avoided by the enquirer stating his enquiry directly to the receptionist, who will know how to route it correctly.

A few examples may show the type of enquiry dealt with in the Information Centre: what was the favourite horse of Alexander the Great?; where and what is Gordon's Leap?; how many children were born in Western Australia in 1947 and 1956?; is there a society of phillumenists in Western Australia?; how much was spent by Australia on defence in 1956 and 1957?

The Information Centre also houses the Library's stock of current newspapers which includes all West Australian papers and representative titles from the other States and from a wide range of overseas countries.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Nine candidates sat for the Preliminary Examination of the Library Association of Australia, and six passed. Six candidates sat for three papers of the Registration Examination and two, Miss M. Medcalf and Miss V. Creasey passed all three papers. Four other candidates passed in two papers.

Mr. A. Ellis was elected to the Fellowship of the Library Association.

In-service training for all recently appointed members of the State Library staff has continued. This consists of hourly sessions on two afternoons per week devoted to lectures and practice on all sections of the Board's work, with particular emphasis on the use of bibliographical tools. Written work is also given.

The efficiency and confidence shown by the staff, even the youngest, upon which many favourable comments have been received, is due in large measure to the Board's insistence on professional qualification and to thorough in-service training.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

With the expansion of the service the number of persons and bodies to whom the Board would wish to express its appreciation for help, cooperation or donations has grown beyond the reasonable limits of this Report.

To all of them individual thanks have been tendered at appropriate times but some should be particularly recorded: the Lord Mayor and the City of Perth for continued hospitality in placing a committee room at the Board's disposal; the Government's London Office for unfailing efficiency and courtesy in handling overseas business; and the librarians of other libraries who have assisted the service by the loan of books and in other ways.

FRED ALEXANDER, Chairman.

F. A. SHARR, State Librarian.

APPENDIX

Districts in which public libraries operate in association with the Board :—

Metropolitan :Central Wheatbelt :Armadale-KelmscottBruce RockClaremontGoomallingFremantle (a)NarembeenKwinanaQuairadingSouth-West :Tammin

Balingup Northern Wheatbelt:

Drakesbrook Carnamah
Preston Irwin
Great Southern: Mingenew
Kojonup Moora

Augusta-Margaret River

Lake Grace Three Springs
Narrogin (b) Wongan-Ballidu

Nyabing-Pingrup

Plantagenet

West Arthur

Murchison:

Cue

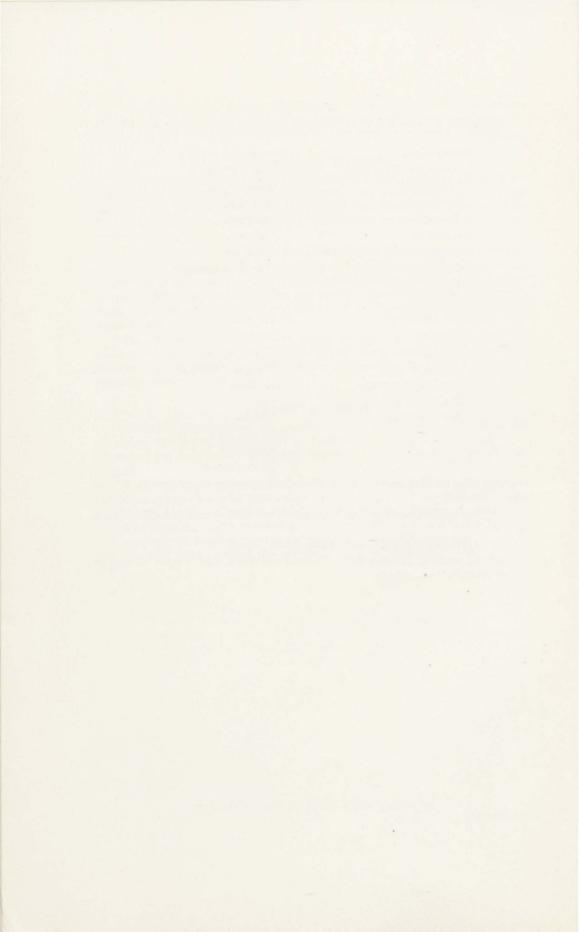
Yalgoo

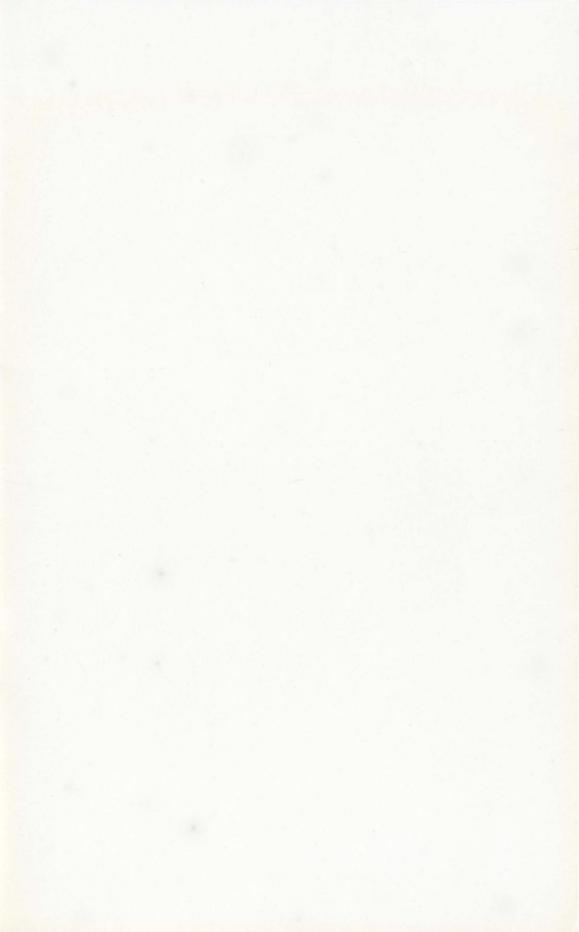
Other:

Esperance Gascoyne (d)

York (c)

- (a) City of Fremantle, East Fremantle Municipality and Cockburn Road Board.
- (b) Narrogin Municipality, Narrogin Road Board and Cuballing Road Board.
 - (c) York Municipality and York Road Board.
- (d) Carnarvon Municipality, Gascoyne-Minilya and Upper Gascoyne Road Boards. $\,^\circ$





The flower on the cover of the Report is the Snakebush, a wild flower only found in Western Australia. The design was executed by Miss Mary B. Devlin of the Government Lithographic Staff.