A detailed botanical illustration of banksia flowers and leaves. The flowers are large, rounded, and composed of numerous small, red, needle-like stamens. The leaves are large, green, and have a serrated, lobed edge. The illustration is set against a plain white background.

THE
LIBRARY
SERVICE
OF
WESTERN
AUSTRALIA

1954-59

THE LIBRARY BOARD OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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1954-1959

7th Annual Report of the Board

PERTH, 1959

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THE LIBRARY BOARD OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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Miss M. E. Wood, M.A., A.L.A.

(*a*) Retired 29th August, 1958.

(*b*) Appointed 4th December, 1958.

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Librarian : Accessions Section	..	Florence McKeand, A.L.A.
Chief Cataloguer	C. L. Drake, M.A., A.L.A.
Librarian : Circulation Section	..	A. T. Pugh, A.L.A.
Accountant and Administrative Officer		A. E. M. Andrews, A.A.S.A., A.A.I.S.



Opening of Moora Library by His Excellency the Governor,
Lieutenant-General Sir Charles Gairdner,
K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O., C.B., C.B.E., K.St.J.

3rd JUNE - - - 1959

RETROSPECT 1954-1959

THE first public library associated with the Board was opened on 27th August, 1954. Much has happened since then and this Report offers an opportunity to sum up the first five years of the Board's work, as well as to record progress in 1958-59.

The Library Board of Western Australia was set up as an independent statutory corporation in 1952 to encourage local authorities to provide public libraries throughout the State, to administer a State subsidy for the purpose, and to co-ordinate such libraries as might be established into a State-wide system. In 1955 the then Public Library of Western Australia was transferred to the administration of the Board.

The local library service of the State thus consists of a number of independent public libraries jointly supported by local authorities and the Board, while the reference service is provided entirely by the Board. Both services are by law free to the user.

Local Public Libraries

There are now 35 public libraries associated with the Board, serving 43 local government areas and 115,000 people, from Exmouth Gulf to Esperance. A further 35 local authorities (representing some 320,000 people) have resolved to establish libraries, or to bring their existing libraries into the service, as soon as the Board is able to provide them with subsidy. Thus in five years local authorities representing nearly two-thirds of the population of the State have been persuaded of the desirability of establishing public libraries. The persuasion has not come from the Board. It has come from the success and good repute of the libraries which have been started and in particular from the range and quality of the books supplied to them by the Board.

A joint enterprise

The Library Service of Western Australia is a joint enterprise between local authorities and the State Government, acting through the Board. It is a genuine partnership to which both sides contribute about equally. Briefly, the Board supplies all the books, central cataloguing, and the Request and Information Service to each public library on condition that the local authority provides suitable and adequate accommodation and staffing.

Before a new library is established a "Scheme for the provision of a public library service in....." is drawn up, setting out in some detail what each party agrees to contribute to the joint undertaking. The Scheme is so drafted that it will ensure a reasonable minimum standard of service; once it has been signed the Board does not attempt to meddle in the internal organisation of the local library.

In the disbursement of State funds, the Board has a moral, and statutory, obligation to satisfy itself that they are used in a manner which it approves. On the other hand, it is the intention of the Act that public libraries should be owned and controlled by local authorities and not by the Board. These two potentially conflicting requirements are met, first by clear initial agreement, and thereafter by regular and informal visits to and discussions with local authorities and their officers.

By these means, the Board has won the confidence of local authorities. It would like to take this opportunity of expressing its appreciation for the ready and cordial co-operation which it has received at their hands.

Books

When a new library is established, the Board provides the book-stock from its Circulation stock, on a scale of one book per head of population : 33 per cent. are children's books, 27 per cent. novels and 40 per cent. adult non-fiction. These books remain the property of the Board.

Every library receives a small quick reference collection proportionate to its size from which many day to day enquiries are answered. More difficult reference enquiries are forwarded to Headquarters for expert attention backed by the full resources of the State reference library.

If there is an existing library, its books become vested in the Board for general use throughout the State and are normally removed to Headquarters when the new stock is delivered. Unless it vests books equal in number to one-third of its population, the local authority has to pay in cash for one-third of the new stock.

After the library has been open for about four months regular exchanges of books begin. The minimum rate of exchange in the smaller libraries is 120 volumes every two months. In the larger libraries it approximates to one per cent. of total stock per fortnight.

Suburban librarians are expected to select their own books for the exchanges. Country librarians are encouraged to take as much part in selection as they can. A welcome recent development is the practice by a number of country librarians of regularly coming to Perth to select their exchanges. This clearly offers an indication of both their and their local authorities' keenness.

While, therefore, the Board provides all books and will give as much help as a local library may desire in selection, it does not dictate the choice, within the limits of its broad policy statement.

The Board's policy on book selection is to buy books on all subjects likely to be of any significant interest in Western Australia, having regard to the volume of demand for various subjects and types of book, and to place special emphasis on certain defined subjects. Among these special fields are : most practical "how to do it" subjects, agriculture in its technical, commercial and engineering aspects,

the countries of the Indian Ocean and Near North, the major Dominions of the Commonwealth and all aspects of local government administration.

The fact that 85 per cent. of the very wide range of books asked for on the Request and Information Service are supplied from stock indicates that the selection of books is well and carefully done.

A Drama Library, consisting of sets of plays for play reading, has been established to help youth organisations and dramatic societies, and a start has been made on a music collection. Both plays and music are supplied to local libraries on request.

As a building takes shape by laying many bricks, so a library is built up by the selection and addition of thousands of books. And as the bricks must be laid in accordance with the design of the building, so the books have to be selected in relation to a clear and coherent policy and judged by well defined standards. The Board defined its policy in general terms in 1953 and has adhered to it ever since. Books should be acquired and supplied "which foster a full, useful and good life and which tend to the personal development of the individual or the social development of the community"; and which "provide information on any subject which may reasonably be expected to be of value to the public, including the industrial and commercial world." This might be expressed less formally as: books should be provided which will help those who would help themselves or help other people. It is the reader who uses books for a constructive purpose, that the Board is particularly glad to serve.

In 1953 there were many who conceived the purpose of a public library as nothing more than to relieve the tedium of idle hours; they ignored or were unaware of its real value and asserted quite dogmatically that West Australians did not want and would not read books of information, education and inspiration. The Board refused to accept that view. It had faith in the people of Western Australia. It believed, and in the event it has proved that, given access to a wide range of books, they would read widely and welcome the opportunity to do so.

It placed the emphasis, and has continued to do so, on breadth and quality in its bookstock. The establishment of that policy, and the demonstration of its success in practice, was probably the most significant contribution made by the Board to the ultimate development of a good library service in this State.

The Request and Information Service

Before the first libraries were established, it was the proposed exchange system, which avoids stale stock, and the Request Service which attracted the interest of local authorities contemplating joining the new service. Since then the Request and Information Service has established itself as a vital part of the whole system, and the demand made upon it has grown rapidly. Over six thousand requests were received this year from local public libraries.

If a reader at a public library asks for a non-fiction book which is not in the local stock, the request is forwarded to Headquarters. The book is then supplied (at least, an average of 93 per cent. are supplied) on loan either from another library, from the pool stock at Headquarters, from the State Library, or if it is not in stock and cannot be purchased, by borrowing it from some other library within the State or elsewhere. Advanced and expensive works which are traditionally regarded as "reference" books are readily lent to local libraries in this way.

Two broad classes of people make most use of this service : students and practical men and women. For students of all types it is invaluable and minimises one of the most serious disadvantages of living away from the metropolitan area. Practical folk who want to improve their business, start a sideline, repair their house, build a boat, prepare cattle for showing, overhaul their car or truck are now learning, in the places where libraries exist, that the library is the place to go for ideas and information.

It is of no use to have a fine bookstock and an efficient request service if people do not know what to ask for. Every public library is therefore supplied with a loose leaf printed catalogue in book form of all non-fiction in the service. This is of great value in making known the wide resources of the whole system in even the most remote library.

Local Librarians

In the few larger libraries, professionally qualified librarians are appointed as a condition of the Board's co-operation. In the majority of libraries, however, (median population, 1,600) the librarian is a local woman working part time.

The librarian is at least as important as the books. It is he or she who creates the atmosphere of welcome, encourages people to make their needs known and so get better service, and makes the children look forward to coming to the library.

The Board cannot speak too highly of the enthusiasm and efficiency of most of the librarians with whom it has the pleasure of working. They are doing a fine job and the good name of the service rests to a large extent in their hands, because they are at the grass roots where the reader (for whom the whole system exists) actually gets his book.

It is now the accepted custom for all new librarians to come to Perth for a period of training. This has proved of real benefit in explaining the system to them and in giving them confidence in the Headquarters services upon which they can call when they have gone home to the country. In the early days this training lasted only a day or so ; now local authorities willingly send their librarians for

a week or a fortnight. It may some day be possible to organise a short conference and course for all librarians to meet and discuss common problems and new ideas.

Buildings

No one would claim that the premises in which the first few libraries were established in 1954 were either adequate or particularly attractive. The Library Board and its ideas of public libraries were innovations in Western Australia and local authorities preferred to await developments before investing very much in premises.

The Board was content to wait. It was confident that good books and keen staff would soon make the libraries so successful that the local authorities would wish to house them in appropriate premises. It is therefore significant that of the first six libraries to be established, four have already been rehoused, two by taking over much larger and attractive rooms, and two by the building of new libraries.

Over the years since 1954 the standard of accommodation has steadily improved, and now most of the libraries are bright, cheerful and attractive.

The State Library

In 1954, after the death of Dr. Battye, Cabinet decided that "the library services provided by the Trustees of the Public Library, Museum and Art Gallery and by The Library Board should be amalgamated" and invited the Trustees and the Board to consider how this could best be done.

There were two obvious courses open: the Trustees of the Public Library, Museum and Art Gallery could take over the Board's function or the Board could absorb the Public Library. After lengthy discussion the latter course was adopted, and in 1955 the necessary amending legislation was passed.

On 1st December, 1955, therefore, the Board became responsible for the old Public Library, and set about a vigorous policy of modernisation of the building and service. On 14th December, 1956, it was re-opened by His Excellency the Governor, as the State Library.

The Board was determined that, so far as the matter lay in its hands, the transfer of the State Library should not adversely affect public library development in the country and suburbs, and before embarking upon the re-organisation, received an assurance from the Government that the necessary additional funds would be provided.

In framing a policy for the State Library, two objects were clearly desirable:

- (a) that unnecessary duplication of both books and service should be avoided, as between the State Library and the new public libraries springing up in the metropolitan area and the country;

- (b) that the resources, of both books and staff in the improved State Library should be available to enrich the service given by public libraries throughout the State.

It was therefore decided that the policy of the State Library, as the central reference library, should be :

- (a) to provide more advanced service of both books and staff than is appropriate in a local library ;
- (b) in addition to meeting the needs of the minority of citizens who could come in person, to act as a strategic reserve for all local libraries and to provide information directly by post to country residents throughout the State who were unable to use the agency of a local public library.

The essential characteristic of a reference library is high quality informed personal assistance to users, based upon a large and first class bookstock. A reference library provides information service, rather than just books. For this it requires three expensive elements, among others : specialist staff, wide bibliographical resources and extensive periodical holdings. Such service clearly cannot be provided in local public libraries, yet the need of country and outer suburban people for reference service is as real as that of city people.

The reference library user of today, unlike his counterpart years ago, is often a specialist and needs the aid of a bibliographic specialist as his librarian. A librarian asked for the pressure enthalpy for Freon 12 or the current provisions concerning the industrial employment of pregnant women in Sweden (two recent enquiries) clearly needs more than a general acquaintance with literature.

To meet, and stimulate the expression of, this type of demand, the State Library was divided into six specialist subject units and several qualified librarians were added to the staff. The advance both in the quantity and standard of public use and demand in the last two and a half years, which is still continuing, has proved the advantages of this reorganisation.

The J. S. Battye Library of West Australian History was developed from the former Archives Branch. All material relating to Western Australia, whether official, unofficial, printed or manuscript, including the government archives has been concentrated in this library. The intake of historical material for preservation, both public and private has been trebled and considerable progress made in the compilation of indexes by the staff. One of the aims in mind in establishing this library and giving it a distinctive name was to encourage the public not to destroy personal and business records of historical value but to deposit them for safe keeping and use by students. While, undoubtedly, this aim has been achieved to some extent, a great deal of potentially valuable material is still being destroyed by citizens who do not realize its significance ; continuing effort is required. The Board's many contacts in the country are of course useful in this.

The Library of Business, Science and Technology was an innovation in Western Australia but quickly proved its value to the industrial and commercial community and to students. Equipped with a good up to date collection of books and a fair, but not yet adequate, range of technical periodicals, and abstracts (just over 800 titles) it is able to answer most of the enquiries made of it immediately. A minority, but a not insignificant number, requires further information which is obtained from specialist sources all over the world. Indeed, an important aspect of the service of this library in particular, and to a lesser extent of the other libraries, is to give the specialist enquirer in Western Australia access to the resources of specialist institutions overseas.

The Information Centre is designed to give snap answers to snap questions, mainly in the commercial field. It is equipped with world wide telephone and trade directories, business men's guides to conditions in overseas countries, official commercial publications, telegraphic codes and a wide range of similar quick reference material. It also controls the collection of current newspapers, complete for Western Australian papers and giving good coverage of those from other States and overseas.

The Library of Social Sciences, Philosophy and Religion covers the subjects which its name implies and includes a very large collection of Australian and overseas official publications. When the State Library was reorganised, the main emphasis was placed on the Battye Library, the Library of Business, Science and Technology and the Information Centre. Little more could be done for the new Social Sciences Library than a rearrangement of the bookstock and the provision of some staff. It was intended that a thorough overhaul and strengthening of the bookstock should be carried out later when funds made it possible. It has not yet been possible to do this. Meanwhile the use of the library by students and the general public has very greatly and surprisingly increased. Its full reorganisation is becoming a matter of some urgency.

The Library of Literature and the Arts was fortunate at its inception, in that the old Public Library represented these subjects more adequately than most others. Up to the present it has been necessary, therefore, to do little in strengthening its stock, except in Australian literature. Substantial additions have been made in this field and the coverage is now quite good.

The Bibliographical Centre, placed centrally in the building, is in many ways the hub of the whole organisation. It contains catalogues of the State Library ; of all local public libraries ; of additions since 1956 to all other major libraries in the State ; and of all periodicals currently received in over 100 libraries in Western Australia ; together with a good range of printed bibliographies, periodical indexes and subject guides. Apart from giving specialist bibliographical service to users of the State Library, it is designed as a centre of co-operation between all libraries in the State and between Western

Australia and the rest of the world. The Bibliographical Centre is unique in Australia and there is no doubt that the co-ordination and co-operation now existing between libraries of all types in Western Australia is exceptional even by world standards.

Headquarters Organisation

The functions of Headquarters in the early days were to select, acquire, catalogue, process and distribute books for local public libraries. With the advent of the State Library, the acquisition and cataloguing of its books and the administration of the building, staff and service also fell upon Headquarters.

Until 1956, it was concentrated in one house in Havelock Street, West Perth, but the reorganisation of the State Library freed some accommodation into which Accessions, Catalogue and Administration Sections were able, at last, to expand. The Havelock Street premises are now occupied entirely by Circulation Section and due to expansion of the public library service will very soon become inadequate in size.

The initial staff of Headquarters in 1954 was seven, the staff now is 23. In five years they have selected and put into use 175,000 volumes, made possible the establishment of 35 libraries at distances up to 630 miles from Perth, carried out regular exchanges and the Request Service to all these libraries, and contributed a major share to the reorganisation of the State Library.

1958-59

GENERAL SURVEY

This has been a year of remarkable progress in almost every aspect of the Board's work. The local public library service expanded by 48 per cent. during the year. Use of the State Library, after trebling in the two previous years increased by a further 17 per cent. over the year but by 33 per cent. in the last three months. The number of books specially requested by readers on the Request and Information Service increased by 65 per cent. Estimated expenditure by local authorities, ranking for subsidy, increased by 74 per cent. As, however, the funds allocated to the Board did not increase during the financial year 1958-59, it was not possible to take in that year the steps necessary to ensure a comparable rate of development during 1959-60 or to meet the rapidly increasing demand for library service which has now outstripped supply.

The membership of the Board remained unchanged during the year except for the appointment of Mr. J. E. Try in place of Mr. H. G. Cant who resigned prior to his election to the Senate.

In the absence overseas of the Chairman (Professor F. Alexander) the Vice Chairman (Cr. C. N. Harris) acted as Chairman for some six months. In North America, the Chairman visited a number of public libraries. His main impression was that the new buildings were far better than those of the existing libraries in Western Australia especially in their provision for staff working and amenities, but that in the libraries of comparable size which he visited their bookstocks were no better, if as good, as those in our public libraries.

In January, Dr. Keyes D. Metcalf, Librarian Emeritus of Harvard University, and Mrs. Metcalf visited Western Australia for ten days at the invitation of the Board. Dr. Metcalf travelled over 1,200 miles, saw seven public libraries in the country and suburbs, and visited all sections of Headquarters and the State Library. He made many valuable comments, both in discussion with the staff and to the Board itself. The Board wishes to express its appreciation to Dr. Metcalf for making the journey from Canberra to Western Australia, for the pleasure and inspiration which he gave to all who met him and for his unsparing efforts to grasp, assess and constructively criticise the library scene in this large State.

Last year's annual report mentioned the use of inter-library duplicate exchange to obtain scarce books and periodicals. By this means 91 books and 492 periodical parts were obtained from Great Britain and one book and 339 periodical parts from other Australian libraries. 368 monographs and numerous parts of 611 periodical and serial titles were offered to other libraries on exchange. These came from duplicates in the State Library and from donations of surplus stock received from a number of other libraries and business concerns.

It has been decided to base the Board's classification on the new 16th edition of the Dewey classification from 1st January, 1960. In many subjects, for example Chemistry, the existing Dewey classifica-

tion schedules have been outmoded by developments of thought in the subject. The adoption of the new edition will permit the books to be arranged on the shelves in a manner consistent with current concepts.

The library resources of Western Australia were up to a few years ago meagre. Then they began to develop due to increased Government expenditure not only on the Board but on the University Library and departmental libraries. To arrange that this expenditure did not result in over-lapping of service and duplication of purchases was clearly desirable not only for economy, but also to ensure that the total resources of the State grew as fast as possible.

Over the last five years much thought has been given to this matter, and as a result, a fairly clear pattern of co-operation has been developed, particularly between those libraries having professional librarians. Thus, for example, in the technologies, the University Library tends to be concerned with theoretical and pure research material, while the Board has concentrated on applied research and industrial applications, the University with the theoretical and psychological bases of management, the Board on management techniques in the office or workshop. While the Board is much stronger than the University Library in some subjects, it recognises that the University is and ought to be stronger in others. This co-ordination of effort does not reduce expenditure, but greatly increases the value received from the same expenditure.

An instance may be quoted. Recently the "Journal of Polymer Science" split into two separate periodicals, one devoted to pure and the other to applied polymer science. It was quickly agreed that the University Library would take one and the State Library the other. Thus both aspects of the science would be covered in Western Australia and in the library most appropriate to each.

In its last annual report the Board commented upon the necessity for a new building to house Headquarters and the State Library. Tasmania has commenced the construction of a new State Library to cost £720,000; Queensland has nearly completed a £200,000 reconstruction of its present State Library; large additions and alterations to the Public Library of New South Wales have been started; in Victoria the contract has been let for a substantial addition to the Public Library; and in South Australia plans are being drawn up for a new State Library.

Despite the addition of 50 additional chairs in the State Library at the end of last year, it is now not uncommon for almost every chair to be occupied and demand is still growing. Much of the book stack is quite full and within a year it will be impossible to shelve in sequence new books in most subjects. The establishment of any additional public libraries will render the Havelock Street premises used by Circulation Section very inconvenient and inefficient and it will be impossible to service more than a very few additional libraries from there due to lack of space to handle the increased movement of books. A new Headquarters and State Library building is therefore becoming urgent.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

The books, totalling, 37,252 volumes (as against 19,485 last year) have been provided for five new public libraries at :

Kalamunda	Scarborough
Merredin	Toodyay
Canning Bridge	

and for three new children's libraries additional to existing adult libraries at :

Kojonup	Fremantle
Moora	

In addition the stock was prepared for a new library at Boyup Brook and for a children's library addition at Margaret River which were planned to open in this year but were delayed because their new buildings were not completed by 30th June.

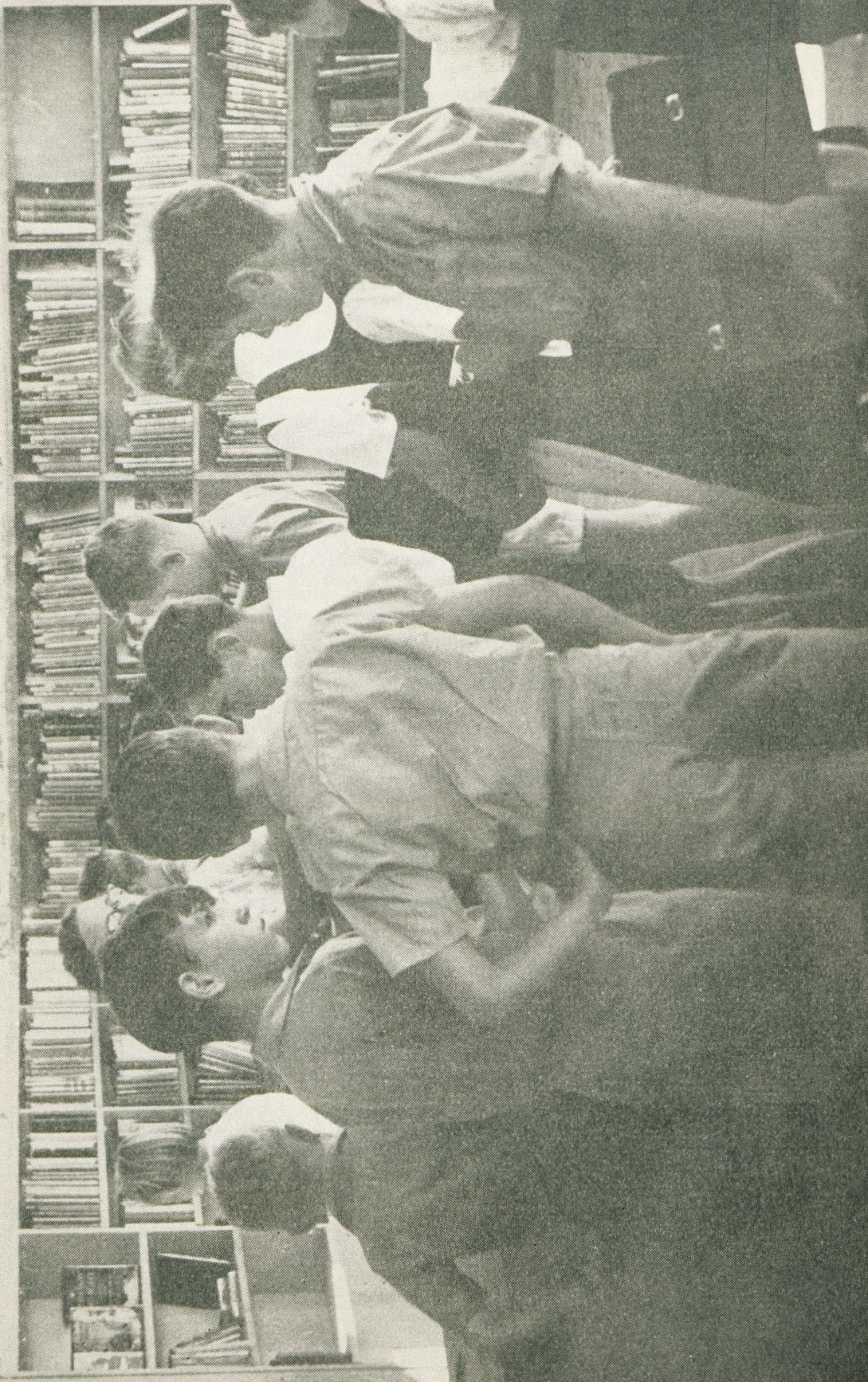
The total number of public libraries in the service is now 35 serving 43 local authorities, which are listed in the Appendix. There is, however, a waiting list of 35 local authorities (as against 28 at the end of last year).

Scarborough library, in an attractive contemporary building, has been very successful. It serves a population of 12,000 and after six months' operation had enrolled over 5,000 readers. The cost of the building was £9,000 and Perth Road Board is so satisfied with the public response that it wishes to proceed with the erection of at least two more libraries in other suburbs as soon as the Board can provide the necessary books.

The new library at Moora, described by the Chairman of the Road Board Association as the best in any country district, was opened by His Excellency the Governor on 3rd June. It forms a separate wing of a new office building for the Road Board and gives a delightful appearance of light and space. The Moora library, the third to be opened in the service, in September, 1954, was originally in distinctly cramped quarters. Now it has premises of which any small town might be proud.

The exchange programme involved Circulation Section in the inward and outward movement of 58,000 volumes (46,000 last year). This number will be much higher next year when the effect in a full year is felt of the larger programme of development this year. Three thousand and fifty five loans were arranged between libraries and 1,360 books lent from Circulation Section.

Public use of the Request and Information Service has sharply increased during the year and the high standard of books asked for reported in all previous years has been fully maintained. Requests received from local public libraries numbered 6,369 (3,968 last year).



The following list, the first 15 requests received on the last Monday of the financial year, may serve as a random sample to show the type of book for which readers take the trouble to ask :

Wiley .. ..	..	17th century background	C.S.
Timbie and Bush ..	..	Principles of electrical engineering	S.L.
Freud .. ..	..	Psychopathology of everyday life	C.S.
Hogan and Wind ..	..	The modern fundamentals of golf	C.S.
Nicolson .. ..	..	King George the Fifth	C.S.
		Information on how to help a lad to overcome a speech impediment.	
		Information on shellcraft.	
Wherrett .. ..	..	Composition	C.S.
Keyes .. ..	..	Bernadette of Lourdes	C.S.
Chinn .. ..	..	Television broadcasting	S.L.
Haas .. ..	..	Men and sharks	C.S.
Cassell's .. ..	..	English-Dutch, Dutch-English dictionary	C.S.
Garside and Phillips ..	..	Textbook of pure and applied chemistry	S.L.
Hughes .. ..	..	Early mediaeval music up to 1300	C.S.
Wellesz .. ..	..	Ancient and Oriental music	C.S.

All these requests were supplied from stock. The two subject requests were answered by State Library. The initials C.S. and S.L. show that the book concerned was in Circulation stock or only in the State Library. They give an indication of the "breadth and quality" of the Circulation stock to which reference has been made.

The revision by Catalogue Section of the printed catalogue continued steadily and 340 pages (57 per cent. of the whole) were reprinted. At this rate the whole catalogue would be revised every two years but, as has been stated in previous reports, a complete revision every year is really needed.

The close contact so necessary between local librarians and Headquarters has been maintained by visits to almost every library during the year, by the continued issue of the News Letter and by the growing and welcome practice of country librarians coming to Headquarters to select the books for their exchanges. Now that there are four professionally staffed libraries in the metropolitan area, a fortnightly meeting of the librarians with the Chief Assistant Librarian has been instituted to discuss and co-ordinate book selection for their libraries. A revised edition of the Handbook for Local Librarians has been issued.

In a recent paper Dr. Lowell Martin, Dean of the Rutgers University Graduate School of Library Service, criticised American public libraries for providing small book stocks for people near their homes rather than stronger book resources at a little distance and shared

by more people. "We have used the policy of the country general store or, more properly, of the earlier vendor on wheels, rather than the policy of the strong shopping centre. As a result most Americans can get a book of fiction by going down to the cross roads, but cannot get a subject book even by driving an hour into town." The same criticism could have been made of the early British attempts to establish country library services, though it would be very much less true today.

The Board was aware, from the outset, of this overseas experience and was able to learn from their mistakes. That is why it has consistently advised local authorities to set up strong central libraries and not to dissipate their resources in box schemes, small branches and the like, which cannot give effective service.

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.

To obtain, for the first time, a definite stock figure, every book in the Library was physically counted at the end of the year. The stock was found to be 181,712 volumes, of which 23,010 had been added in the three and a half years since the Board became responsible for the Library.

The number of books used by readers was 142,063 (121,902 last year). 20,535 information enquiries were recorded and answered (17,350 last year). 6,157 pages of photocopies or microfilm were produced at readers' request (4,160 last year); 460 pages were produced at other libraries' request.

The State Library has a large, and potentially valuable, collection of serials published by governments, learned bodies and intergovernmental organisations in Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, and several other Commonwealth countries.

In library terminology, "serials" comprise all continuing publications, such as periodicals, bulletins, reports, etc. Serials constitute by far the largest part of all publication—in the order of 75 per cent. Because such publications typically record the day by day development in their fields of interest, they constitute for many subjects—especially the rapidly developing social and physical sciences and technologies—the most important part of all publications.

On the other hand, serials are the most difficult of all materials to bring under bibliographical control and arrange for ready use. They vary in size from single sheets to large volumes, they are issued regularly or irregularly, not infrequently out of normal numerical order, and both they and their issuing bodies change their titles, amalgamate or split up with disconcerting frequency.

The size of the State Library's collection may be judged from the fact that it practically fills an area 140 feet by 40 feet.

Some two years ago a plan was prepared to bring this vast mass under control with the object of making it readily available for use.

The plan envisaged two stages, physical sorting and arranging, to be followed by cataloguing and the preparation of proper records. Very substantial progress has been made in the first stage mainly by the staffs of the Library of Business, Science and Technology and the Social Sciences Library. Some progress has been made towards stage two in the field of technology, but the main responsibility for this stage will have to rest on Headquarters. It is hoped that in the forthcoming year it may be possible to appoint additional staff to enable this work to be started. If so next year should see an increasing proportion of this extremely useful material realising its full potential value for reference and research work.

Among the more important additions to the State Library during the year were the volumes so far published of:—

Proceedings of the Second United Nations International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, held in Geneva, 1958 to be published in 33 volumes of which eight have been received.

Transactions of the Fifth World Power Conference, held in Vienna, 1956. 19 volumes.

Transactions of the Third Congress on Irrigation and Drainage, held in San Francisco, 1957. (5 volumes).

A History of Indian Philosophy by S. Dasgupta. (5 volumes).

Motif-index of Folk Literature by S. Thompson. (6 volumes).

The new definitive editions of the complete works of Bach, Handel, Haydn and Mozart.

The J. S. Battye Library and State Archives

Mollie Lukis, B.A., Librarian and Archivist

This library concentrates on two main objects: the collection, preservation and organisation of all material, printed, manuscript or photographic, on the history of Western Australia; and the provision, as quickly and accurately as possible, of answers to the many and varied local history queries received. Many of these queries would involve the staff in slow and tedious searches if efficient indexes were not compiled. Regular indexing of the more important local newspapers, periodicals and government publications is therefore carried out currently by the staff. This year, in addition, special provision was made towards the completion of the index to early newspapers. Items of local news in the "Inquirer," the "Herald" and the "West Australian," with its predecessors, together with passenger arrivals, the arrivals and departures of ships, and shipwrecks have been indexed to 1890.

A number of important series of records were transferred from government departments during the year, including files from the Education Department from its formation in 1893 until 1947, occurrence books and journals from Kalgoorlie and Boulder police stations dating from 1895, and files from the Registrar-General's Office for the period 1886-1928. Material was also received from a number of local authori-

ties, notably from Claremont Municipal Council and Cue Road Board, the latter collection included the records of the former Cue and Day Dawn Municipalities.

As no money was available for additional shelving, space in the Archives stack was limited, and though all records offered were accepted, transfers of material were not sought; 155 feet of records were added to stock, over 100 feet less than the quantity received in 1957-58.

Staff visited fifteen government departments during the year to examine records for disposal, in some instances the accumulation being such that a number of visits were necessary.

Notable donations of private records during the year included a collection of material relating to the district, made by the late Major H. M. Whittell, presented by Bridgetown Road Board; the scrap-books kept by the late W. E. Bold while Town Clerk of Perth, presented by his widow, and the records of the Fremantle Orchestral Society presented by the late R. M. Clifton.

The collection of photographic records was considerably strengthened this year; of great importance was the decision of West Australian Newspapers Ltd. to give to the Battye Library each year the discarded prints from the Press Photo Service, from which a selection of pictures illustrating different phases of contemporary life can be selected annually for preservation. Several hundred photographs no longer useful for publicity purposes, but interesting historically, were transferred from the West Australian Tourist and Publicity Bureau, and seven hundred miscellaneous old photographs were received from other sources.

Private records lent for copying, amounting to 7,456 pages, were microfilmed during the year; filming of the files of the "West Australian," apart from current files, has been suspended at 1910, and work has begun instead on some of the other early newspapers which are in a frail condition. "The Herald" published in Fremantle from 1867-1886, has been completed and work is now in progress on some of the first goldfields newspapers.

In addition to answering enquiries, giving assistance to research students, and continuing with the work entailed in processing the various records deposited, the staff have been engaged in two large projects during the year: the compilation of a list of holdings of Western Australian newspapers—both current and discontinued—for the union list of newspapers at the Australian Bibliographical Centre in Canberra, and the checking of the typescript for the latest volume of J. A. Ferguson's "Bibliography of Australia" to indicate holdings and provide additional entries for the many rare Australian books and pamphlets in the State Library.

Library of Business, Science and Technology

Norman Horrocks, F.L.A., Librarian

"Scientists and engineers throughout the world are slowly—perhaps too slowly—coming to realise that progress in science depends upon the intelligent solution of problems in the field of scientific and technical information. These problems are aggravated in a country

in which centres of population are separated by great distances and in which there are no great libraries such as in Europe or North America. Whereas in older countries the main problems are concerned with making resources of scientific and technical information available to the users, here the more immediate need is to build up these resources."

This observation was made recently in "Nature" about South Africa by the President of the South African Council for Scientific and Industrial Research but it applies with equal force to Australia.

In addition to exploiting its own resources, one of the main aims of this library since its establishment two and a half years ago has been to seek out other and hitherto hidden resources within the State. For example, business firms using the library are asked to list the periodicals to which they subscribe. These titles are then recorded in the Bibliographical Centre's Union Catalogue of Periodicals. In 1956 this Catalogue contained 2,800 titles: it now has about 5,000.

Two instances of this co-operative building up of resources may be quoted. The Works Chemist of a large chemical firm commented recently that until this library was established his firm had had to subscribe to a number of general technical periodicals. "But now," he said, "we know that you are filing them, so we shall cancel our subscriptions and instead take rather more out-of-the-way journals which you do not have." In this way and at no extra cost the resources of the State have been increased.

The second example is taken from a large industrial firm. Its practice was to circulate its periodicals around its technical staff. No systematic preservation of back issues was attempted. Members of the staff wanting any particular article would tear it out for their personal files. Recently the firm offered to pass over to the library the complete files of those periodicals to which the library does not subscribe. These files are preserved at the library for the benefit of readers throughout the State. Any member of the firm wanting to refer to an article is supplied with a photocopy.

Although the total population served by this library may be much smaller than that served by similar sections in other large libraries yet its stock must be just as comprehensive. In fact, the number of enquiries received compares more than favourably with the number reported by good libraries elsewhere, in much larger cities. This may be due in part to the lack of other library resources in Western Australia.

Two years ago the annual report mentioned that the stock of this library included "a large but uncounted number of pamphlets, research studies, trade catalogues and other unbound material." During the past year attention has been concentrated on bringing together and making good the gaps in the holdings of "research studies." Hitherto these have been largely uncatalogued and physically scattered in the library. This year 140 series of research studies have been dealt with. They are now entered in the public catalogue and can be speedily found and used in answering enquiries.

As the State Library now has a Kodak microcard reader, the microcard edition of Beilstein's "Handbuch der Organischen Chemie" was acquired. This work lists all known organic chemical compounds. In book form it occupies 27 volumes, over 5 feet of shelving. On 927 microcards it takes up only 7 in. of 5 in. x 3 in. drawer space.

Some examples of queries handled this year are given below. None of them is of a confidential nature :

- Do any standards exist for talcum powder ?
- Have you any information on the Pregl-Parnas-Wagner nitrogen micro-distillation unit ?
- How long was Snellius' Mile ? (Snellius was a Dutchman born in the sixteenth century).
- What is the Buxton Certificate for machinery ?
- How does the Almen test machine operate in the evaluation of boundary lubricants ?
- Have you any pictures of bottles used in England in the 17th Century ?

Library of Social Sciences, Philosophy and Religion

David Allen, B.A., A.L.A.

Students, at all levels of educational development, form the greatest single group of readers in the Social Sciences Library but it is worth emphasising that, in addition to its assistance to those undergoing organised education, the library helped a large number of people to solve practical problems arising from their day-to-day affairs. This may be illustrated by examples of information enquiries, which ranged from the academic :—

- Are the original manuscripts of the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus still in existence ?
- Upon what Biblical text is the seventh corporal act of mercy (to bury the dead) based ?

to the practical :—

- What foods must I avoid giving to a Muhammedan priest who is coming to lunch ?
- Is there a book giving the regulations governing the export of goods from Western Australia ?
- What are the economic advantages and disadvantages of stock-piling large quantities of coal ?
- Is there a market for lucerne either in Western Australia or the Eastern States ?

The second major preoccupation of the library staff, after the needs of readers have been met, is the selection and organisation of stock. The steady increase in public use (amounting to 51 per cent. in the year) has not been offset by any increase in staff and progress in this "back room" work has therefore been less rapid than could be wished.

Work on several projects has, in fact, been virtually suspended. These included the organising of the maps and charts and the much needed systematic revision of the bookstock. In addition, the work of examining the former Public Library stock and the discarding of volumes which have outlived their usefulness was in abeyance for three-quarters of the year.

On the other hand, some advances have been made. Before work on the map collection was discontinued, several series of particular usefulness were prepared for use. These included the Australian Geographical Series, the Australian sheets of the International Map of the World and the Australian Charts.

Perhaps the most significant achievement during the year was the completion of stage one, sorting and arrangement, of the large holding of United States Government serial publications inherited from the former Public Library.

Library of Literature and the Arts

Ronald Wright, B.A.

The growing local interest in the theatre and other arts is seen in the increasing demand on this library. This results in requests not only for literary texts but also for designs for stage sets and, for example, an illustration of a charcoal brazier required by a country repertory club.

Interest in Australian literature has been stimulated during the year by visits to the State of Miss Kylie Tennant, Mr. Alan Marshall and Mr. T. Inglis Moore. Mr. Moore was impressed by the library's recently enlarged and extensive collection of Australian literature.

The small, but slowly growing, music collection was used by a number of readers. A somewhat surprising request—for the 1710 edition of Corelli's "La Folia" variations—came from a country student. The library had a copy in stock.

Books on architecture are always in demand, patronised alike by the architectural student, the home designer and the self-help builder.

Lest it be thought that the Arts Library is restricted in its activity to things purely cultural the following enquiries, satisfied during the year are appended :—

Specifications and design of an Olympic Swimming Pool.

The significance of the designation Murano, required by a city jeweller in connection with a consignment of Venetian glass just received.

The Arabic for the term "New Supermarket" required for the purpose of marketing Western Australian eggs overseas.

Information Centre

Rex Price

The activities of the Information Centre have this year followed the pattern of the preceding years—to give ready answers to questions by phone and to members of the public calling at the State Library. The following list from among the many hundreds received gives some indication of their scope :—

What is meant by a light year ?

Migration to and from Australia 1947-56.

The origin of the clerical collar.

When was photography discovered ?

Which was the first car to cross the Nullabor Plain ?

Name and addresses of three leading American producers of T.V. film commercials.

Provisions of the trade agreement between Australia and Japan, 1956.

Information on importing electrical goods from Japan into Australia.

There has been a noticeable increase in the number of Asian students using the Centre both to check information for their studies and to read the Asian newspapers.

Current newspapers, which include all Western Australian papers, the main papers from the Eastern States and representative titles from overseas countries are kept in the Information Centre.

A frequent demand is for assistance in the translation of foreign letters and to meet this need a list of translators has been compiled and has proved of help to readers.

Bibliographical Centre

Arthur Ellis, F.L.A.

The Outlier Union Catalogue now contains approximately 15,600 cards for books in other libraries in the State and is becoming a most useful aid. A clear example of its usefulness is seen in the result of a request from the Public Library of Queensland for a specialized book on water well drilling. The Outlier Union Catalogue showed that the library of the Kalgoorlie School of Mines had the book and it was lent from there to Queensland. Without the Outlier Union Catalogue it is probable that the request would not have been satisfied.

The same example illustrates another, more limited, use of this catalogue : it draws attention to books that may not have come to the notice of our own staff, and in this case the book was ordered for the State Library. The converse is also true : that unnecessary duplication of expensive and little used books can be avoided if it is known that a copy is already available in the State.

Unfortunately because of the press of other work, particularly the Request and Information Service, not enough time can be given to editorial work on the Outlier Union Catalogue and this may prove to be serious in the long run. However, this work has been lessened to some extent by the adoption of the Berghoeffler system of filing for personal author cards, which eliminates the need to assimilate the various forms of heading adopted by co-operating libraries to a standard form.

The use of the Request and Information Service has increased by 65 per cent. this year. 8,205 requests were received (4,998 last year). 93 per cent. were satisfied, 85 per cent. (6,962 volumes) were supplied from the Board's own stock, 3 per cent. (279 volumes) were borrowed within the State, 2 per cent. (164 volumes) from other States, 1,454 pages of photocopies were obtained interstate or from overseas to meet 2 per cent., while four works were borrowed from overseas. 360 volumes were lent to other libraries, intra- and interstate.

The recataloguing of the former Public Library stock proceeded fitfully during the year and 21,507 volumes have now been recatalogued. The main recataloguing project has recently had to be suspended, due to lack of staff.

Twenty-five per cent. of the stock of the State Library is now catalogued to acceptable modern standards either by recataloguing of former Public Library stock or by the addition of books catalogued by the Board.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Eight candidates sat for the Preliminary Examination of the Library Association of Australia and all passed. Seven candidates sat for twenty papers of the Registration Examination and six passed in a total of thirteen papers. Miss M. Medcalf completed the Registration Examination.

Mr. I. D. Tweedie was granted leave of absence without pay for one year to accept an internship in Lancashire County Library, England, for further professional study and experience.

In-service training in bibliographical method and reference work has continued as reported last year.

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, co-operation 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.

CONCLUSION

Among the popular fallacies and common delusions not to be found in the reference books, but nevertheless widespread, is the idea that a library is something static, like an ancient temple, which once established will survive unchanged for generations without further attention. But a library is not a monument, or a storehouse, it is a powerhouse supplying information, ideas, the life stream of progress to the community it serves. Books are its fuel supply, the librarians its dynamos. If a power station is starved of fuel or its generating capacity not expanded as the load increases, it will quickly break down. The same applies to a library.

A library exists to serve the intellectual, industrial, spiritual and cultural needs of its community. These needs are growing all the time—and rapidly. Old ideas fall out of currency and are supplanted by new. New industries arise. New subjects of study open up. Population expands. The use of books and information increases. If the library is to meet these needs, to reflect the changing interest of society and to anticipate its new and rising demands, then it must have the resources to keep up to date and to expand. If it does not do so, then it will cease to be used and will die.

The evidence in this report proves that the libraries are used well, and for constructive purposes. It shows the steadily increasing demand. The Board is confident that it can meet this demand if it can be given the fuel supply and the generating capacity required.

The question is sometimes asked, "Can we afford a good library service?" In a State in urgent need of development, the question should rather be "Can we afford not to have one?"

FRED ALEXANDER,
Chairman.

F. A. SHARR,
State Librarian.

APPENDIX

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

Metropolitan :

Armadale-Kelmscott	Darling Range
Canning Bridge	Fremantle (a)
Claremont	Kwinana
Scarborough	

South-West :

Augusta-Margaret River	Drakesbrook
Balingup	Preston

Great Southern :

Kojonup	Nyabing-Pingrup
Lake Grace	Plantagenet
Narrogin (b)	West Arthur

Central Wheatbelt :

Bruce Rock	Quairading
Goomalling	Tammin
Merredin (c)	Toodyay
Narembeen	York (d)

Northern Wheatbelt

Carnamah	Moora
Irwin	Three Springs
Mingenew	Wongan-Ballidu

Murchison :

Cue	Yalgoo
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Other :

Esperance	Gascoyne (e)
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(a) City of Fremantle, East Fremantle Municipality and Cockburn Road Board.

(b) Narrogin Municipality, Narrogin Road Board and Cuballing Road Board.

(c) Merredin and Westonia Road Boards.

(d) York Municipality and York Road Board.

(e) Carnarvon Municipality, Gascoyne-Minilya and Upper Gascoyne Road Boards.

The flower on the cover of the Report is the
Albany Banksia. The design was executed by
Miss Mary B. Devlin of the Government
Lithographic Staff.