

EDITORIAL

There is no particular theme in the articles for this issue but it is good to be able to publish a comparison of the two encyclopaedias, *Laws of Australia* and *Halsbury's Laws of Australia*. From time to time people ask me which one they should purchase. The two works come from entirely different directions. There is no answer to the question. Read what Lynette Falconer has to say about them.

If you ever wondered what a university law librarian does (they drink a lot of coffee) Nick Pengelley takes us engagingly through a week in his life.

I have just spent a week of my life in Seattle at the AALL Convention accompanied by Ruth Bird (see National Convenor's column) and John Bahrij (now at the University of the South Pacific in Fiji). There were other delegates from the UK, Canada, and New Zealand, as well as the United States, so the Convention provided an opportunity for informal discussion on interlibrary loans, Moys, and other matters affecting law libraries in the Commonwealth.

There were very good sessions in Seattle on library management and the Internet. One speaker thought librarians would be superseded in twenty years' time, but the prevailing view seemed to be that our organisational skills will still be needed to make databases easily accessible. I find it curious that some people believe keyword access to databases will be sufficient. Is this death to books like *The Bramble Bush*, and will all the law monograph publications be put on computer? Considering the mass of material involved I confess to being sceptical of this view. The cost of putting the first 40 years of *Commonwealth Law Reports* on a database has so far proved prohibitive; similarly with the *Law Reports* up to 1945. Does this mean only a selection of texts will be automated? Will computers then dictate that we confine our reading to these texts? I don't think so.

Personally, I can see law reports and statutes becoming more popular in automated form than in hard copy, but for a 200 page book of "ideas", as opposed to "information", I feel people will continue to prefer the print form. The two will complement each other. If this is the case, just hang in there - we shall, after all, survive!

JACQUELINE ELLIOTT - EDITOR

NATIONAL CONVENOR'S NOTES



I recently attended two law library conferences - the New Zealand LLG in Auckland and the American Association of Law Libraries conference in Seattle. Both conferences were of a

high standard, and offered new ideas and the chance to renew acquaintance or meet new colleagues. The New Zealand LLG Group is to

be commended for preparing such a high standard three day meeting for a relatively small group. They had nearly 170 registrants, and the enthusiasm and interest of participants was infectious. In the next issue I will outline some of the management issues which arose from Holley Moyer's papers which were presented on the second day.

The American conference, by contrast, is somewhat overwhelming - over 2000 registrants,