

EDITORIAL

Someone asked me in Brisbane recently if I thought it was 'essential' to have access to the Internet. I replied that if you don't have it I think there's a feeling that you are "missing out". I feel like that at present because I only have e-mail access. Even so, I wonder how people cope with all the e-mail. Some days I am too busy to look at it. It is not on my desk terminal but on a remote PC twenty yards away which means that I might get to it at 5 p.m. and find 120 messages waiting.

One of the suggestions posed at the Seattle AALL Meeting was: "Dare not to subscribe"! Has anyone joined LAWLIB for example, and dared to unsubscribe? If so, write in and let us know whether you now feel "out of it". Clearly there is some psychological attachment to e-mail lists. Once lists are joined it is hard to break away, but are you spending a useless half-hour each day deleting unwanted e-mail? I know I am spending at least 15 minutes deleting messages, but I keep on the list just in case something important turns up. We need to get the balance right so we don't over-work, but it is not easy.

Like a car (or photocopying machine!), when the Internet works, it works really well. We have a continuing space problem in the High Court Library and are always moving books from one floor to the next to make room. *US Law Week* was a title taking up a whole bay but I was not sure if we should be keeping the back volumes since most of the cases would be reported. I used

the Internet to contact a law librarian in New Orleans to ask what the practice was in the US. Within hours the answer came back that yes, they do only keep the last two years, and yes, we can discard the General Part. This was great news so I am passing it on to all those who subscribe to *US Law Week* and have a space problem. If you do need an earlier case after you have thrown out the old volumes, *US Law Week* is always available on LEXIS.

I was delighted to meet and talk to the Queensland ALLG members in September. There is a very active group of law librarians in Brisbane and they had a range of questions to ask about the Seattle Conference and law librarianship in general. Every two years is not really often enough for us all to meet, is it? I hope we will eventually put on an annual law librarians' conference like BIALL, CALL, and AALL.

Finally, you will note in the Publishers Liaison column a copy of the Tasmanian Group's recent letter to Butterworths, who have cut off their representative in that State. The outlying places are just where the representatives are needed, and the Tasmanian agent was by all accounts doing an excellent job. This decision is a backward step and a particularly depressing one for Tasmanian law librarians. Let us hope that Butterworths reconsiders the matter.

JACQUELINE ELLIOTT - EDITOR

NATIONAL CONVENOR'S NOTES



The past couple of months have been relatively busy for us all. In Melbourne we had the IBA Conference, which did not involve law librarians directly,

but through hard work on the part of the Victorian Division we were able to obtain sponsorship from several publishers.

This enabled the Group to hold a cocktail party for members which allowed us access to the Trade Show. It was one of the rare opportunities we have to see the methods used by the publishers to market their wares directly to the legal profession.

The other challenge facing us is the competition between the publishers to produce CD-ROM products which is hotting up - most recently we have had *Laws of Australia*, *Halsbury's Laws of*