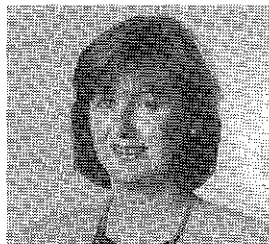


NATIONAL CONVENOR'S NOTES



I just can't believe how fast this year is going - I'm not sure if that's a sign of being busy or just the fact I'm getting older! I look back over the time I have been National

Convenor, and I have to say that one of the most enjoyable aspects is the contact I have had with law librarians all over Australia and indeed internationally. People have called to speak to me over a whole range of issues that are relevant to law librarians and I have found this extremely stimulating. I encourage anyone to give me a call or send me an email if you have anything you would like to discuss. I believe this is one of the most rewarding aspects of our group - the building up of a strong network of people.

As I mentioned in my last report, the ALLG National Committee is developing an *Australian Law Librarians Group Handbook* to provide information on various services used by law librarians and to act as a directory for the group. I'm happy to say that we have made a lot of progress on this project and I look forward to unveiling the finished publication in Melbourne in October (*Speaking of Melbourne - how did we miss scheduling the Symposium before the AFL grand final weekend? My husband is very disappointed about this!*)

In addition, I have been working very closely with Anne Greenshields at Murdoch University to develop the ALLG's homepage on the Internet. We hope to have a draft version for people to look at and make comment on in the very near future, so I'll keep you posted as to when we have the address. Developing a homepage is a very interesting experience - once you start, you realise the incredible potential this technology has. I've also spent a lot of time looking at other homepages to get ideas for ours - there are

certainly some very creative people out there and it is my intention that the ALLG homepage should be not only be a useful site to visit, but also creative as well.

Speaking of the Internet, it is interesting to reflect on how important that old adage "the medium not the message" seems to have become with the recent controversy over the availability of Family Court decisions on the Internet. A great many of us wrote letters to the various newspapers trying to shed some light on the importance and relevance of having this material available in electronic format. I was interested to discuss this issue with a number of people outside of both law and librarianship to see what their perceptions were. There seemed to be a strong feeling that the real problem was the ease of access that the Internet brings, rather than acknowledging that this information was already available in the public domain. It is obvious that this issue will now raise ongoing discussion about Internet access and usage.

And finally, continuing in an electronic vein - I ask you to give some thought to the Computer Law Services Librarian of the Year Award. CLS consulted me in developing the criteria for the award, and it really set me thinking about the way our profession is changing and the challenges we are facing. I could think of a large number of my colleagues who have taken up the challenge and developed electronic networks, designed databases and educated others in using these new resources. I think the hard part will be deciding who of the many should win the award!

Cheers until next time.

Anne Gardner
National Convenor ALLG
Ph: (09) 429 7537
Fax: (09) 429 7666
Email: anneg@ibm.net