

Letters

Bookstock standards

The trials of establishing bookstock standards was once again demonstrated in the enlightening and encouraging article from WA in *InCite 2*.

I have often wondered why libraries are so keen to establish total stock figures without a policy for eventual replacement of the stock. Surely the grand stock figures of some of the world's best libraries are somewhat false without an adequate stock replacement program.

It was disappointing when, in the 2nd edition of *Books and beyond*, the Schools Commission dropped its quantitative stock replacement standard of 10 percent per annum. Many public libraries are just as guilty, although some public libraries in Victoria use an 8-10-year cycle and in South Australia a rigorous seven-year program is used. How many universities and colleges have replacement policies?

Maybe it is impossible in these tight financial times for many libraries to have a realistic stock debiting program, but the more out of date a library's stock becomes, the less relevant that library is to its users. Without the continual evaluation and withdrawal of a library's unused stock at the same time as new titles are added, the library will gradually but surely ossify. Unread books on shelves cost money to store and make it more difficult for users to find the books they want to consult.

Too often we convince ourselves that the book itself is the sacred object when it is the knowledge it contains that is all important. Books, like bikinis, cigarette packets and wine bottles may be a passionate interest of small bands of collectors, but it is their contents that have much universal appeal. We turn up our noses at BO, stale smoke and vinegar, why are we trying to kill off our library users?

Euan M. Miller
Chief Librarian,
Public Libraries

News FLASH!

The first edition of the List of Australian Subject Headings, brightly known as FLASH is now available!

John McKinlay has produced FLASH, a cohesive list of subject headings, to be used in conjunction with and to supplement the ninth edition of Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH).

To obtain your copy of FLASH, complete the order form below and send it with your remittance to: LAA, PO Box M371, Surry Hills NSW 2010.

Please send _____ copy(ies) FLASH to

Cost: \$10 (LAA Members)
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Farewell to an old friend

DR KORNEL DE 'SIGMOND, former Chief Librarian of the Bendigo College of Advanced Education, died on 14 September 1981 at the age of 57, as the result of a heart attack.

Sympathy goes to his mother in Hungary and to Rita de 'Sigmond, his widow, in Bendigo – from all Kornel's many friends and associates.

He was the kind of person you could never ignore. Kornel burst upon the Australian library scene early in 1960 when he joined the staff of the University of New South Wales Library, in the year when John Metcalfe established the first postgraduate university school of librarianship in Australia.

He attended the first courses offered by the School of Librarianship and gained the Dip Lib. Then in his late thirties, he already possessed a Ph D from the Peter Pázmány University of Budapest, in psychology and philosophy. From 1945 to 1948 he worked in the Library of that University's Department of Psychology and in 1949 he arrived in Australia.

At the University of New South Wales Library, Kornel worked in the Acquisition and Cataloguing Departments. His great love was rare books and he was one of the very few people equipped with the wide scholarly knowledge necessary to operate in this field with success. One of his library lecturers he regularly accosted in French, that being the language suitably gallant for such communication!

In 1967 Kornel was appointed Chief Librarian of the Bendigo Institute of Technology. After taking up this appointment in December 1967, he saw the BIT and the State College of Victoria (Bendigo) amalgamate under the new name of Bendigo College of Advanced Education (BCAE). In this time he planned the first Library which was erected on the Edwards Road campus as the tertiary site of the College progressively moved out of its City campus.

After amalgamation he was responsible for tertiary and non-tertiary libraries on three campuses – Edwards Road, Osborne Street and McCrae Street.

Kornel's health failed in April 1979, causing him to retire. One of his last jobs was to plan a new library, amalgamating the former Teachers' College Library and the BIT's Tertiary Library. This was officially opened on 18 September 1981 by the Governor-General, Sir Zelman Cowen.

Kornel had planned to attend, but died of a heart attack in the early hours of Septem-

ber 14. It is fitting that the Director of the BCAE, Dr Max McKay, paid tribute at the opening ceremony to the dedication and expertise of the College's former Chief Librarian – and the sadness that must be felt by all present in knowing that Dr de 'Sigmond was not there to see his plans come to fruition.

Kornel was a foundation associate of the Library Association of Australia and a member of the University and College Libraries Section, Special Libraries Section and Public Libraries Section.

He was also a foundation member, Association of Librarians of Colleges of Advanced Education; a member, VIC. Chief Librarians' Association (Executive Member 1970/71, 1971/72; President 1972/73); member VIC Library Committee (March 1972-March 1975); executive member, VIC-SAC (1970/71); and member, VICSAC Library Committee (1971-73).

A man of cheerful demeanour, he was prepared to fight hard for what he believed in even if it meant jeopardising his personal advancement.

Kornel was a walking catalogue of bibliographic references. His encyclopaedic knowledge, especially of the non-European world, never ceased to amaze.

A dedicated librarian with a long-term research interest in historical bibliography, library planning and architecture, and readers' education in a multi-media environment, Kornel worked hard and loyally for the advancement of library affairs and people both within and outside the places where he worked.

A generous character, he was ever ready to share his knowledge with friends, colleagues and fellow students and to a provincial Australian he opened up an undreamt volume of lore.

Among his many talents mention must be made of Kornel's prowess at chess, à la Clausewitz, and his extensive English vocabulary covering at least the last four centuries of literature.

He lived up to the noble traditions of his Hungarian forebears, and the ancient Sicilian title of Primor to which he was entitled to lay claim – but rarely did. For him it was enough that he had a doctorate in philosophy and had sworn allegiance to the Queen as a naturalised Australian citizen.

The world has grown drab now that Kornel can no longer regale us. *Virtus funera superat.*

Robert Langker
Uni. of New South Wales

Books on demand

THE ACQUISITION OF another 2500 out-of-print books during 1981 means that UMI's 'Books on Demand' reprint service now offers almost 100,000 titles.

UMI has spent forty years acquiring reprint rights to rare and Op books from all over the world, in many languages and on a wide variety of subjects. Through 'Books on Demand' Service, libraries, booksellers and private customers can order custom-produced reprints, usually in the same size as the original, printed on acid-free (longer-lasting) paper and bound in either soft or hard covers.

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Are libraries meeting the needs of our multicultural society?

Just one of the topics to be explored at
LAA – 22, Adelaide, August '82.