

MEDICAL LIBRARIANS' GROUP (VICTORIAN BRANCH)NEWSLETTER, MARCH 1974

MARCH, 1974

MINUTES of the Meeting held 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday, March, 5th, at Alfred Hospital.

APOLOGIES were received from the following members:

Miss Judith Quilter, Mrs. A. Drury, Mrs. Helen Cotsell,  
Miss Esther Martin, Miss Virginia Stevenson, Mr. Maurice Williams,  
Mrs. Pam Hill, Mrs. Beryl Miles, Miss Amy Bush, Mrs. Jo Marshall,  
Miss Elizabeth Gray, Mr. Bruce Davidson and Miss Sandra Russell.

The meeting began with a welcome by the two new co-conveners, Mrs. Marion Rock from the Austin and Mrs. Val Strantzen from Repat. Copies of comments by AACOBS on the Stisec Report were made available to any members interested in reading them, as a follow-up to the special meeting held last year at which the Group discussed the Report.

It had been hoped that the Medical Library Directory would be completed ready for tonight's meeting. However there has been a delay due to a paper shortage. It is proposed that about 50 of the Directories will be issued to each Member Library, which fills its own information and returns the copies to the next meeting for distribution. We hope that some progress will be made with these plans by the May meeting.

The formal listing of journals recommended for use in the small medical library has now been completed, and copies were made available. This list has been found useful already by new medical libraries seeking advice in this area from the Group. (See also below).

Along similar lines, one of the projects for 1974 is to compile a list of books and reference works considered necessary or useful for the small library. Mrs. Jacqueline Baillie suggested that a small Committee be given the task of preparing an initial list, for presentation at the next Meeting. It was decided that Mrs. Enid Meldrum would join the co-conveners, and Miss Amy Bush, who was unable to be present at the meeting, will also be invited to help.

A Consultative Panel for small hospital libraries has had one meeting at the Austin, attended by Miss Anne Harrison, Mrs. Baillie, Mrs. Meldrum, Mrs. Rock and Mrs. Strantzen. Enquiries had been received from several hospitals requesting advice on the establishment of medical libraries, to be run by generally untrained persons, notably Dandenong & District, Wimmera Base at Horsham, Box Hill and Latrobe Valley Hospitals. Mrs. Baillie put quite a bit of time and effort into preparing guidelines for the setting up and operating of these new libraries; they include suggestions as to the Classification System to be used and advice on book selection and ordering, and accepted inter-library loan procedures. These guidelines, called Notes on Plan of Instruction for Untrained Persons in Charge of Hospital Libraries, are available from the co-conveners for anyone interested in seeing them.

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It is also felt that there is a demand for the services of the Medical Librarians Group, in some form of matching arrangement, whereby each of these 'learner' libraries may be paired with one of the larger hospital libraries till it gets on its feet. Mrs. Baillie pointed out that geographical details of the libraries concerned will have to be considered.

Mrs. Rock has been contacted by Mrs. McIver from the Education Department, concerning a New Guinea in-service training scholarship. Mrs. McIver has the task of devising a four-month course of medical library experience for a New Guinea girl who has had training as a library officer and a library technician, and who requires experience at a more senior level than is available at Papua and New Guinea University. There should be no problem in arranging for the girl to work in various member libraries for periods of perhaps 3-4 weeks.

A submission has just gone in to the Committee of Enquiry into Hospital and Health Services in Victoria. Miss Harrison prepared the submission, at very short notice, on behalf of Librarians and pointing out the need for increased aid. It is hoped that the Victorian Government will put pressure on the Commonwealth for at least some help. The submission was sent out under the signature of Miss Harrison, Secretary, C.M.L.O., on behalf of the Medical Librarians Group - this was after the conveners read through it and approved the requests. At the meeting, Miss Harrison pointed out that this was the third submission to be made; she has just heard that the submission to the Australian Universities Commission is at least being considered. It was made by George Franki on behalf of the Medical Librarians (national Group) for the Committee on Medical Schools, and was reported in the MLG newsletter of December, 1972.

A point of interest was the availability of a temporary librarian: Mrs. Kristiansen, 7 Graylea Ave., Herne Hill, Geelong (739-79), is a qualified librarian, and can work as a relief for about 6 weeks at a time, for librarians on leave etc. She has been helping at Royal Women's for the last four months during Mrs. Cotsell's absence.

The 18th LAA Conference is due to be held in Melbourne, August 1975, and a series of workshops is planned. It is hoped that a Planning Committee will be set up from within the Medical Librarians Group to represent the medical librarians as a specialist group.

Mrs. Baillie reported that the AACOBS Committee on Medical Library Services is to be disbanded; its reappointment has been precluded by the new pattern of AACOBS programs. It was suggested that it continue as an independent body, but this suggestion probably will not be followed up as it could duplicate the fields of interest of the Medical Librarians Group.

The last item on the agenda was a most interesting talk by Mrs. Fay Baker, relating her experiences during her recent visit to Vietnam as Medical Library Consultant for the W.H.O. Mrs. Baker began with a background description of Vietnam, mentioning the very high mortality rates and disease prevalence, and the French influence. American Library advisors first came to Vietnam in 1955, and have continued to influence

libraries there. The French library system used is very different from that used in most other countries: it features closed stacks, and book classification by size (petit, medium and grand) and accession no. There were no libraries organized for general use, and no national programme for library development. The first W.H.O. consultant on education was sent to Vietnam in 1967, and initiated courses with the main function of training health personnel.

Mrs. Baker looked at the larger libraries which have been more recently established and described their features, and then told of the beginning of library training, which really only began in 1958 under U.S. Sponsorship. The National Library of Vietnam does have plans to run sources. The Vietnam Library Association began operations in 1958, died out between 1959 and 1968, then was re-established. There are hopeful signs now of a national development of libraries, one of the most important being the enthusiasm of the younger librarians in Vietnam, but Mrs. Baker feels that the country has far to go before it can boast large, efficiently organized and well-used libraries.

Several questions and a short discussion followed this talk, and Mrs. Ellen O'Halloran moved a vote of appreciation to Mrs. Baker for providing such an informative item. Supper was then served.

The next meeting will be held in the Medical Library, Austin Hospital in Heidelberg on May 14th. The plans are to have another workshop around equipment, library aids, time-saving devices etc. - a general discussion on how we can swap ideas on efficiency and labour saving.

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