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International Dateline

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Yankee Book Peddler, Inc.

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INTERNATIONAL DATELINE

Section Editor: **Glen M. Secor** (YBP, Inc.)

Editor's note — I would once again like to thank Liz Chapman for her contribution and encourage any of you out there from other parts of the world to send in interesting news items for inclusion in this section. Along those lines, please welcome our newest correspondent, Vicki Nicholson of James Bennett Library Services, Australia (who at the time of this writing is visiting Ireland and southern France for six weeks of leisure and cycling!). — GMS

U.K. News

by **Liz Chapman** (Oxford University)

London — GOVERNMENT PROPOSES NEW LIBRARY COMMISSION — The U.K. government have issued a Green Paper outlining proposals for a **Library and Information Commission**. A consultation document went out with replies due back by the end of April. The Department of National Heritage (DNH), the government agency which generally covers libraries, are organizing the consultation. It is proposed that the Commission should advise government on all UK library and information issues, but it will not extend to Scotland and Wales on specific matters. It will also have responsibility to advise on European Union (the new name for the EEC) issues, such as the European Plan and wider international issues. The Commission will be able to advise on the work of other government departments which have implications for information services, for example education or industry. The plan is for a group of about a dozen members drawn from the profession, independent experts, and library users, with a set-up date for the summer (if we ever have one).

At the same time, local government is being reorganized in the UK and large library services, often with specialist collections, are under threat of break-up. **The Library Association** is very active in lobbying on this issue. As if that wasn't enough for public libraries, they are to be surveyed by Aslib Consultancy on behalf of the DNH to provide a fundamental statement of purpose for their sector.

London — LONDON BOOKFAIR — This spring, the London International Bookfair moved its venue to a different hall in Olympia so that everything was on one floor. This gave the impression of a smaller fair, although it was certainly easier to get around. There was also an impression of more rights-selling than used to be the case and therefore a lack of publishing people on the ground to answer the librarian's questions on new books. **NAG** (National Acquisitions Group) took a stand at the Fair for the first time and also organized a seminar for publishers wanting to know more about marketing to libraries. The publishers (and others pretending to be publishers) listened to a library supplier (vendor to you guys), a public librarian with lots of money to spend, and a poor old academic librarian (guess who?).

ENDNOTE — The British Library Document Supply Centre have recently satisfied their 70 millionth request.

Australia!

by **Vicki Nicholson** (James Bennett Library Services)

AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND JOINT LIBRARY CONFERENCE — For colleagues in the Northern Hemisphere looking for an excuse to come "Down Under" this year, they might consider a forthcoming conference in Wellington, New Zealand. **The Australian Library and Information Association** and its equivalent in New Zealand, the **New Zealand Library and Information Association**, are holding a joint conference between 20-30 September. The conference program is not out yet — it should be available by the time you read this — but the theme of the conference is "He Waka Eke Noa — Embarking Together" and early publicity has a strong flavour of Asian-Pacific information partnerships. Acquisitions Librarians attending the conference are invited to attend an informal dinner. There will also be a NZ/Australian Science Librarians' Seminar on "Automated Document Delivery and Resource Sharing," with the keynote speaker being **Dr. Terry Cannon**, Assistant Director, Research & Development Department, British Library. Interested? For a programme and registration brochure, contact the conference organisers, CCM Ltd., P.O. Box 6175, WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND, telephone/fax 64-4-472 7420.

JIM BENNETT PASSES AWAY — Those who have been in the business of acquiring Australiana may recall Jim Bennett, founder of James Bennett Library Services, Australia's major library supply company. Jim Bennett died on 17 February 1994, in his 81st year. Colleague **Alan Bundy**, Librarian of the University of South Australia, prepared an obituary published in *INCITE*, v. 15 (3), 1 April 1994, celebrating Jim's career. After migrating to Australia from southern England in 1936, Jim tried his hand at jackerooing, rabbit trapping, gold prospecting, deep sea-fishing, and tractor selling amongst other pursuits. He set up his library supply business in 1958 with 500 pounds, after a successful business selling Chinese scrolls. By 1978, through Jim's hard work, intelligence, superb

Papa Lyman Remembers

Halsey William Wilson

by **Lyman Newlin** (Book Trade Counsellor)

In July, 1944, Wilcox and Follett needed a manager for its first non-Chicago enterprise: the Minnesota Book Store in Minneapolis. It was the first of what was to become a chain of hundreds of Follett stores on campuses all over America. It was decided that I could be spared temporarily from Follett Library Book Company to act as Minnesota's Manager until the war ended and more management personnel could be available.

During my "temporary" tenure, which

lasted four years (1944-48), the company acquired management of the bookstore of Macalester College in St. Paul and in 1947 it purchased the Minnesota Coop, a bookstore just off the University of Minnesota campus which had been founded by Halsey William Wilson over half a century earlier. It was in this store that H.W. Wilson's frustration in trying to locate sources of books culminated in his beginning the catalog of new books of American publishers, *The Cumulative Book Index*.

In 1913, Wilson had moved his indexing Company to White Plains, New York, and later still he moved it to the Bronx where it is now (midway between Yankee Stadium and the Polo field). Because of this, Wilson sold the bookstore which he loved to **Harriet and Hilda Johnson** who operated the store until Follett bought it in 1947.

Halsey Wilson's contribution to scholarship in general and to the dissemination of information through printed material was incredible. Can you imagine life without CBI or BIP?

Before the CBI, booksellers had to depend primarily on the separate catalogs produced by individual publishers.

This was a time-consuming and often fruitless effort for Wilson, the alert young bookseller who had built his store into the best in the Twin Cities. This is what it was like before H.W. Wilson decided that a tool like CBI was necessary. Wilson and his clerks took the individual publisher's catalogs and collected them into the CBI.

For an old timer like-me who cut his teeth on the CBI, it is difficult to describe the use to which we put it in the days before Bowker's *Books in Print* which first appeared in 1948. I have often compared the "pricer-quoter" (that was what they were called back then) employed by library booksellers such as Folletts or McClurgs or the old Baker & Taylor to a timpani player in a symphony orchestra. This clerk was surrounded by the CBI beginning with the 1908 cumulative volume and others up to the current volume. Each large volume had its own stand and it was often necessary to consult several volumes before the proper information about publisher and price could be located. You have it easy now and you don't even know it!

Richard Abel reminded me that be-

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memory, arithmetic mind, and unflinching honesty, this had developed into a \$6 million a year business. He retired in 1978 and was honored by the Library Association of Australia with its Redmond Barry Award for "outstanding service" to libraries. On that Award, **Harrison Bryan**, Librarian of the University of Sydney, wrote: "When the full story of library development in this country comes to be written, one element of that considerable revolution will be given its due measure of recognition — namely the sources of supply for all the new material that was acquired so quickly. When that happens, the name of James Bennett will be properly recorded." Jim Bennett's memorial is the company he founded and the millions of books that are on library shelves today because he did so well.

KNIGHT RIDDER PURCHASES EQUINET — From *ONLINE CURRENTS*, v. 8, no. 3, November 1993, comes this item of interest to librarians and others interested in accessing Australian financial information.

Knight-Ridder Financial, Inc., a subsidiary of the US-based Knight-Ridder media group, announced that it has agreed in principle to purchase the Equinet equities market information service from McIntosh Securities, Ltd.

The Equinet service was designed and created by McIntosh Securities in 1986 to provide financial markets clients with access to live prices, news, and historical data covering the Australian and New Zealand Stock Exchanges, futures and options exchanges, and international currency markets. Knight-Ridder is the owner of *DIALOG* and *Data-Star*, with strengths in the provision of business, science, technology, the social sciences and news information services. The

Equinet equities service already carries live Knight-Ridder news and will no doubt be looking to provide their clients with access to an even wider range of financial news services.

Melbourne — PUBLIC LIBRARY CONFERENCE HELD — Public librarians from all over Australia met in Melbourne in February for their "Trading in Futures" Conference. The talk of the conference was **Charles Landry** from Comedia, Consultancy Research Planning, UK, who I believe spoke around his research published as "The future of public library services" by Comedia. As your correspondent was working hard on the Trade Exhibit, she did not hear the papers he presented. However, it was reported that he told the delegates that dynamic librarians were all working out in the Trade Exhibition — hear, hear! ☺