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International Dateline

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INTERNATIONAL DATELINE

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•••••New Zealand!•••••

by **Gita Gunatilleke**
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He waka eke noa —
Embarking Together in New Zealand

NZLIA/ALIA 1994 Joint Conference,
September 26-30, 1994

In late September 1994 hundreds of librarians from Australia winged their way across the Tasman to New Zealand to meet with their counterparts in Wellington. The occasion was the NZLIA/ALIA Joint Conference held in the capital from 26-30 September, the second such conference in several years. The theme — '*He waka eke noa* or Embarking together' clearly conveyed the idea of what it was all about.

Both countries have bicultural/multicultural populations and geographically were further away from the rest of the world. To maximise the financial, tech-

nological and human resources available within the Library and Information professions there was a need for those within each country to work together. With the advent of the information superhighway, distance seemed to matter less. But the information explosion has made consensus and cooperation more relevant than ever as we approach the 21st century.

The warmth and generosity of spirit generated by the *Powhiri*, the traditional Maori welcome at the *Pipitea Marae*

(meeting house) in Wellington on Sunday evening set the pace for the week ahead, one of cooperation, commitment and friendship. **Dame Catherine Tizard**, New Zealand's Governor General, opened the main conference on Tuesday, briefly touching on her long association with the profession of librarianship.

Most of the plenary sessions were addressed by keynote speakers from both countries. First, on the theme of 'Embarking Together', New Zealand's **Judge Eddie Durie** joined Australia's **John Dawkins**. The next day's theme was on 'Social trends in the next five years'. New Zealander **Moana Maniapoto-Jackson**, who framed her speech with a song, was joined by Australia's **Brian Toohey** with a colourful presentation. After all Moana was not only a mother, lawyer, social activist, etc., but also a successful singer.

On Thursday **Reg Garters** from New Zealand, speaking on the theme of 'Creating the environment for change', held the

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attention of the audience, with his practical hints on how to create a 'Win Win' situation by having commitment, consensus and communication. The concurrent sessions which followed each day covered a range of topics from library & information services in Southeast Asia, and the Pacific, information justice and resource sharing to cooperation within and across traditional library and information sectors.

The Satellite meetings/seminars before and after the main event covered a wide area of interests. The *Hui* (meeting) on issues relating to 'Indigenous peoples — Maori, Aboriginal and Torres Strait islanders' were beneficial for those involved with collections and acquisitions as well as others.

The seminar on 'Copyright' was serious business with a new bill before parliament in New Zealand. The 'Rethinking Reference' seminar conducted by **Anne Lipow, Karen Williams and Helen Hayes** proved to be stimulating, energizing librarians into embarking on changes to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Anne Lipow and John Ober gave an excellent presentation of a seminar on 'Teaching Electronic Information Resources' which was very informative and full of useful hints.

The CODIANZ meeting brought together librarians working with the *Dynix* system to exchange ideas, find solutions to problems, and also to hear from *Dynix* about what was planned for the future. Due to the geographical placement of New Zealand and Australia, the biggest problem for us was the time lag between the availability of new products in the U.S. and these two countries. The problem is compounded by the insufficient availability of information on forthcoming releases. In particular, although we were aware that 'release 150' containing the new 'ACQ rewrite' was being tested in the U.S., our great expectations to find out more about this product at this meeting resulted in disappointment.

As always in these situations one would like the impossible — to be in several places at once — to capture the spirit of each of the sessions which promised to be interesting. The morning and afternoon teas held around the Trade exhibition, was time not only to get a glimpse of new

products and services from a wide range of suppliers from around the world. It was also a time to catch up with colleagues and friends from all over New Zealand and from Australia as well as make new ones. In all, it was a time to talk about collections, conspectus, new products, resources, and exchange ideas on meeting the challenges of the new electronic age without losing sight of the past. The weather unfortunately was not at its best, but the visitors from Australia seemed to welcome the rain as they had been starved of it for months.

It was a week of commitment for the people in each country in working together, while reaching out for fresh new ideas from afar. Australia and New Zealand had for the past few years been working on a joint project which would provide access to each other's national databases and their services as well as gateways to other overseas services with standardised software. A fitting postscript to the joint conference was the news that the contract had finally been signed for this 'State of the art' international library project. It seemed like we had really embarked together. ☸

Innovations

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expects to make additional titles available as it acquires appropriate rights. *Users can obtain trials for Internet subscriptions by calling SilverPlatter at 800-343-0064 or 617-769-2599 or by sending an email message to info@silverplatter.com.*

SilverPlatter has also established a World Wide Web site on the Internet. This site, called **SilverPlatter World**, offers comprehensive information about the company as well as other information about the electronic information industry. Visitors to the site will find information about SilverPlatter's products and activities as well as the contents of the most recent edition of SilverPlatter's electronic directory and many of its product sheets. Another feature that appears regularly on the Web site is "This Month's Search" which spotlights a subject of topical interest and shows the kinds of information that an electronic search can provide. In September, this feature originated with a focus on the International Conference on Population & Development that was held in Cairo that month. Since this conference is only held every ten years and sets the policy for population for the next ten years, the search focused on population from

a number of different perspectives: medical, cultural, social, economic and agricultural. Results of the search were published as well as statistical information about the search which included the databases searched. SilverPlatter welcomes and encourages SilverPlatter World users to submit search concepts. Anyone interested in submitting an article, proposal or search concepts, can send an email message to editor@silverplatter.com.

SilverPlatter is also publishing other pertinent information about the electronic information industry, including industry-related articles and links to other World Wide Web sites that relate to the industry.

Internet Index

SilverPlatter's Internet Index is a Web page that indexes information alphabetically and by subject, with links that give immediate access to the information. This project was initiated several months ago when SilverPlatter began a program to train its staff on using the Internet. **Gerry Hurley**, Director of Education Services at SilverPlatter says: We observed that people were frustrated because they couldn't locate informa-

tion on the Internet unless they knew where it was located and the address. We wanted to do more than just provide a listing. So we created our Index with immediate access to the source, whether it resides on a Web server, gopher, or FTP server.

The Internet Index has two components: an alphabetical index (arranged by title) and a subject index. For example, under C in the alphabetical index is an entry for the Charter of the United Nations. By clicking on this entry, users are linked to the actual text of the charter which displays on the screen. Users can also get access under U (United Nations) in the alphabetical index or under Historic Documents in the subject index.

SilverPlatter considers the Internet Index as a way to enhance access to information and hopes that it will become a tool created by and for Internet users that enables anyone to locate information easily. Access to SilverPlatter's World Wide Web page and the Internet Index is free. To visit the site, the SilverPlatter URL is:

<http://www.silverplatter.com>

Instructions for submitting entries for the Internet Index appear on the Internet Index Home Page. ☸