

MEDICAL LIBRARIANS' GROUP. (Victorian Branch).

AUGUST 1972

The 4th meeting of the above group was held on Tuesday 15th August in the Conference Room, Monash Medical School, Alfred Hospital, with an attendance of 27 members.

Apologies were received from Mrs Dianna Carr, Miss Sue Harvey, Miss Gillian Joseph, Miss Marjorie Pinder and Mrs Joan Tubby.

The meeting opened with a brief mention of our last newsletter, and statement of finances. Our membership then stood at 41, and our finances at \$47. Since the meeting, at which subscriptions were due for annual renewal of membership, our finances have risen to \$81.76 and our membership has increased to 44, not all of whom are financial members for the current year! We would like to remind those who have not yet paid their subscriptions to do so. Cheques or postal notes for \$2 can be sent to Mrs Enid Meldrum, C/- Medical Library, Alfred Hospital, Commercial Rd., Prahran. 3181.

The situation about the proposed talk by a member of the MEDLARS Service has clarified since our meeting, in that the conveners have now met Mr. Paul Hodgson. He was in Melbourne on Monday 11th September, on which day he and the conveners discussed a date for the talk, plus an outline of what we could expect. The date has been set for Tuesday 14th November, at 7.30pm, (note the change of time), at the Monash Medical School, Alfred Hospital. Please keep in mind, or write down and send to the conveners, any problems or questions arising from the use of the MEDLARS Service within your institution. The success of this proposed talk depends upon our co-operation with the speaker. Mr. Hodgson has stressed that his talk will be fairly brief and informal, and he will be relying upon us to ask questions on matters of interest and importance to us.

Miss Judith Quilter gave a brief report on the Wages Case for the Association of Hospital and Health Services Librarians. An interim award was passed down pending the production of a full scale work value study. Miss Quilter mentioned the complexity of such a task, and expected that 12 months - 2 years could elapse in its preparation.

Miss Harrison then took the floor to tell us about her recent trip to Sydney. She reported on the activities of the Sydney, and the Canberra Medical Librarians' Groups, saying that meetings in Sydney have been more in the form of speakers giving lectures, rather than a workshop-type approach, although they are interested in these. They have not yet arranged the financial side of their membership. The Canberra librarians have expressed interest in the possibility of a published list of books and journals available in Melbourne.

Miss Harrison then mentioned the proposed submission to the forthcoming Committee on Medical Schools of the Australian Universities Commission, on behalf of the Australian Medical Librarians' Group. She said it was felt that this submission should be on a national scale, with all states contributing to the final draft. Following on from this, a subcommittee of our group was elected, consisting of Miss Harrison, Mrs Baker, and Miss Bush, to draw up a scheme for the proposed submission to be circulated to all our libraries for comment before passing on to Mr. George Franki in his capacity as representative of our group on a national basis. The sub-committee moved into action very promptly and prepared a most comprehensive draft submission which was circulated for comment by members. Miss Harrison has since mentioned that she received some interesting comments in return. The sub-committee met again on Wednesday 6th September, at which meeting it was decided to submit a document to Mr. Franki from this branch in which we stressed the need for the provision of collateral funds for library support to the medical schools' teaching/research functions. It was also pointed out that the emerging concept of continuing education for medical practitioners would necessitate increased funds. Finally, the importance of the provision of trained personnel with adequate salaries for both medical school libraries and teaching hospital libraries was stressed.

Miss Harrison then went on to tell us of the tentative plans by Mr. Franki for a course in medical librarianship. Mr. Franki has written to the Medical Library Association and obtained details of their courses and curriculum. Preliminary plans are to hold the course every three years at the N.S.W. library school; the first students being those already engaged in medical librarianship. The length of the course would be similar to those of other specialities; about 26 lectures. Topics would include medical terminology, medical reference, and health administration.

The meeting continued with a talk on inter-library loan procedure and protocol by Miss Harrison. She stressed the need for standardization of form of presentation, such as journal title, volume number, year, page number, and author in that order, and the need for reference to the journal title as it appears on the title page to avoid confusion when journals have changed their title over the years.

Brownless like to limit the telephone requests to a maximum of 6 titles at any one time, to avoid telephones being engaged for long periods. Miss Harrison felt that there should be more provision for supervision of junior staff by their seniors in handling I.L.L. requests and that abbreviations of journals should always be checked before requesting. Those librarians requesting foreign language journals regularly should try to develop facility in pronouncing their titles to avoid stuttering and hesitancy in telephone requests. She felt that on the whole, requests from members to Brownless were well organized in that librarians did tend to group their requests into categories, such as straight-out location requests, photocopies, and more complicated enquiries. She felt it to be in the interest of all members to try to limit their calls to one per day, and made the suggestion of only using the telephone in emergencies and posting requests for material which was not urgent. An alternative to this would be the use of an answer phone in the case of libraries such as Brownless handling large numbers of requests each day.

Miss Harrison then went on to mention the publication published by the National Library of Medicine, entitled List of journals indexed in Index Medicus. She felt that with time and thought this could be adapted by the use of code numbers for journal titles used in conjunction with symbols for holding libraries as a quick source reference for current journals. Such a tool could have possibilities of adaption as a union catalogue for small libraries who are not able to afford SSAL. If any members have further thoughts on this subject we would like to hear them at a future meeting.

Supper was served at the conclusion of the meeting.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 14th November, 7.30pm.
Conference Room, Department of Surgery, 3rd Floor,
Monash Medical School, Alfred Hospital.

Talk by Mr. Paul Hodgson, from the Australian MEDLARS Service.
Do try and have some questions ready for Mr. Hodgson on any aspect at all of your experience with MEDLARS.