

BOOK REVIEWS

Who's who in Australian libraries, compiled by Geza A. Kosa with the assistance of Doreen M. Goodman. Sydney, Library Association of Australia, 1968. 181 pp. (\$6; \$5.40 to members).

This biographical directory is a very welcome addition to the reference shelves of Australian libraries.

According to the editor's introduction, it provides biographical information about 949 persons, a substantial majority of the professional librarians of Australia. Those eligible for inclusion comprised Fellows, Associates, and Honorary Members of the Library Association of Australia; those who had passed the Registration examination, the Diploma in Librarianship of the University of New South Wales, or similar qualifications, and "those who were selected because of their positions in libraries or by virtue of their services to librarianship". (Thus by a happy thought of the planners of the work, such distinguished contributors to Australian library services as Ralph Munn, Keyes Metcalf, Andrew Osborn, Maurice Tauber, and Sara Fenwick are included.)

For each biography, entries include name, degrees, present position, place and date of birth, details of family, positions held in the past (with dates), publications (very frequently as "journal articles"), society memberships, including major professional offices held, special interests, and address (pre-postcode?).

The chief defect of the work must be a consequence of the characteristic retiring modesty of librarians and archivists, all of them presumably ever ready to answer yet another letter of enquiry from a scholar rather than return a questionnaire detailing their own status and achievements. For there are many names not included that a complete reference work of this kind ought to have had, from the man who was until recently the Chief Archivist of the Commonwealth down to many a humble but still noteworthy toiler in a back room. (The editor has very sensibly partly compensated for the missing entries by printing as an appendix the membership directory of the Library Association of Australia as at 31st October 1967.)

Even some of those who did not submit returns showed an excessive economy, not just about the traditionally sensitive topics (e.g. and especially date of birth), but about their professional activities: why should we have to look in *Who's who in Australia, 1968*, rather than in the work under review, to discover that Robert Charles Sharman is editor not only of this distinguished journal but of another?*

Yet despite the omissions, despite a few inaccuracies, the directory presents a wealth of information which was not available before, and presents it clearly and concisely. Its best tribute is the frequent use it already receives.

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*Now, in 1969, of a third.