

The State of Things to Come . . .

The Alexander Library Building

Photographs by Photographics Section, J.S. Battye Library
West Australian History.



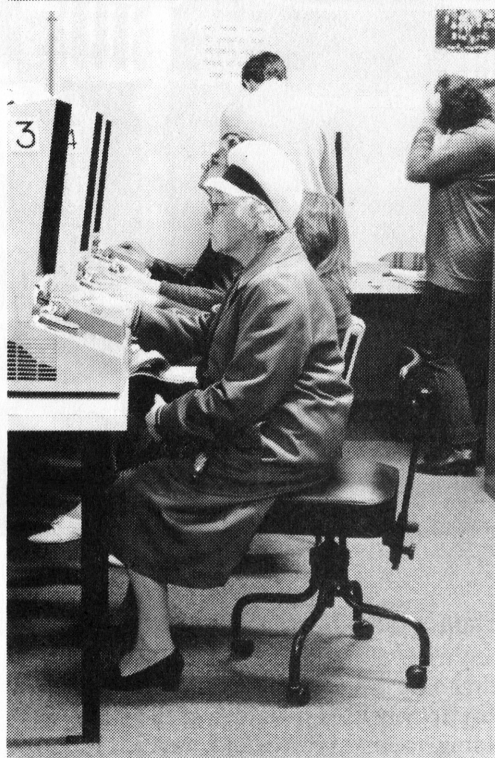
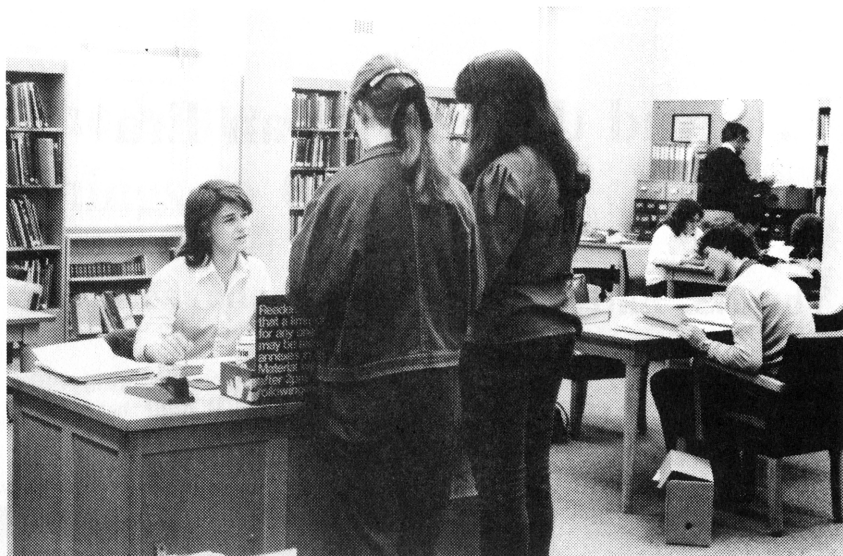
The new Alexander Library Building, almost complete, towers above the old State Reference Library of Western Australia. All of the Library Board's divisions, now occupying eight locations in Perth, will move into the new building, leaving the historic Hackett Hall, built in 1913, to the Western Australian Museum.

. . . And the End of an Era

The J.S. Battye Library of West Australian History and State Archives.



This old home, which backs onto the State Reference Library, once belonged to Dr J.S. Battye, Librarian of the State Public Library from 1894 to 1954. It now houses the reading rooms, senior staff offices, printed records workrooms and the most heavily used materials of the old Battye Library. An adjacent small building houses archives and oral history staff.



Above: The Battye Library reading room is mostly crowded, often noisy, and very hot during summer months.

Left: Readers queue to use microfilms. Nine machines are crowded into two small and stuffy alcoves.

In the new building there will be 27 machines, more space and air conditioning.



Above: Staff work in trying conditions in a workroom, which is also a major passage-way.

Right: To reach the other annexes, staff use a bicycle, for which there is no space to store except in one of the stack aisles.



The Battye Library has four other annexes scattered around Northbridge and East Perth, housing Film Archives, Photographics and Conservation sections, and the bulk of the stock, for which readers are required to wait at least 24 hours. This old church in Aberdeen Street is one of the annexes.



These makeshift, crowded and scattered conditions will change to a purpose-built, relatively spacious and unified state as all sections of the J.S. Battye Library and State Archives come together to occupy the major parts of the third and fourth floors of the Alexander Library Building.