**Donald Murtagh reflections 10/5/2023**

I started working in the Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education Library at 9/11/1978 after an interview by Bob Peters (sic), Mac Collins, Glen Phillips and Mike Grant.

The College Librarian, Grace Rigg, was on long service leave at the time and I was appointed as Senior Librarian. It was intended that I act in her place until her return and ultimately also give lectures on school librarianship.

I found a well-organised library in the capable hands of Ross Angell and Audrey Ford. I already had a lot to learn about the activities at a College library and Ross was particularly helpful. Grace Rigg returned from her long service leave in October 1979 and I acted as her deputy.

In 1980 I gave the first course of lectures on school librarianship. The idea was, I think, Mike Grant’s but there was little interest from the student body. 6 students burned up on the first day and 4 did not return. The remaining 2 stayed and did well until the end of the year. Mike then decided to discontinue the course. I had quite enjoyed it, as it was new ground for me and I had the opportunity to take the students to several school libraries.

Within the library there was nothing out of the ordinary to report until the news reached the College in April 1981 that the Federal Government had decided that the plus/minus 75 tertiary institutions in Australia should amalgamate.

This decision was, I believe, largely a financial one and was not well received at Mount Lawley. Many academic and library staff felt disturbed and even threatened. As the process in WA began staff questioned the benefits and, in many cases, concluded that they could not stay. The College librarians at Claremont and Mount Lawley resigned. At Mount Lawley Ross Angell and a number of others resigned and actually left the library profession. Amongst academic staff I recall Russell Cato, Nim Plummidge were among the number that resigned.

I had experienced similar events in South Africa since 1973 and therefore had no intention of uprooting myself. Financial interference by national governments is common.

Some of the academics I got to know quite well included Murray Print, Terry Williams, Laurie Summers and Trish (surname forgotten), Neill Stuart, Wally Moroz, Jim Miller, Alistair McGregor and a number whole names I cannot remember.

I have nothing more to add except “The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together” (All’s well that ends well).

Donald