

## *Pacific Twins Survey*

The first survey of libraries participating in the Pacific Twinning Scheme was completed in May 1994. The survey asked 19 twins seven questions about what contact they had had, what action they had taken if there had been no response to offers, etc

### *Contact*

I received replies from 14 of the 19 twins surveyed. Their answers show that 13 twins had contact with their Pacific Library in the last twelve months, 10 of these by fax, 2 by mail and one by telephone. The Attorney-General's Department Library had made contact with 3 libraries in Western Samoa and Nauru by telephone as well as personal visits. Contact with Tonga and Kiribati had been by telephone as well as fax.

The only library that had no contact with its PNG twin discovered that the management of the PNG law firm had changed, so that library has recently taken follow-up action by letter.

### *Type of Assistance*

The survey requested information on what type of assistance had been given: had the library sent boxes of books, answered reference questions by fax, or made a cataloguing/organisational visit? The responses show that:

- 1 132 boxes of books, plus a large consignment from Auckland to the Cook Islands, were sent to 8 libraries. 2 libraries have books ready but are awaiting confirmation that the Pacific twin wants the books listed

2. Five of the 19 libraries answered reference questions by fax or post.
3. Four twins received cataloguing/organisational visits and one (Farapo Opa, Attorney-General's Library, PNG) visited her Brisbane twin after the Broadbeach conference and took boxes of books back with her. The sources of funding for the four visits were AIDAB (1) and Attorney-General's Department, Inter-national Branch (3).

### *Freight*

One of the difficulties for libraries in the Scheme is arranging and paying for freight of boxes of books. Several libraries have found ways around the problem by asking the Pacific twin to use its contacts to arrange for the island's airline to waive freight charges. Others have organised a personal pick-up, or just sent one or two boxes and borne the charge themselves.

One library had requested the twin to arrange for 20 boxes to be freighted and had received a cheque for several hundred dollars. This appears to a certain extent to defeat the purpose of the Scheme. However if the Pacific twin does pay for freight it highlights the necessity for libraries to ensure that they receive confirmation first that the books they are sending are required so that they do not send superfluous material.

In recognition of the difficulty some libraries are having, the Survey asked if twin libraries would be in favour of asking the National Committee to make an annual grant of about \$2000 available for freight to the Pacific. This suggestion was unanimously supported. Accordingly, I shall write to the National Committee to make the proposal.

## *Comments on the Success or Failure of the Scheme*

Clearly the libraries that have been able to arrange visits have found the Scheme an outstanding success and those who have sent a few boxes of books are satisfied that it is working

Some comments reflect the inevitable difficulties faced from lack of funds for freight to lack of response to their offers of material. Frustration shows in these comments but there are always reasons why the twin library does not respond

In one case, for example, the Chief Justice was the only person who could make a decision about which books were required, and he was in England on long leave. Patience is required before things start moving. This is just one example, but the sincere appreciation conveyed when the library finally receives the books makes it worth the effort.

Once you have been to the islands you become more aware of the problems that make it difficult for law officers and courts to operate. Comments from those who have made visits show that they recognise these problems :

“A library assistant was appointed when we visited & we trained her. She is very shy and doesn't write, but is always happy to hear from me.”

“One has to be patient & keep writing or phoning or faxing. It is *very much* appreciated, even if they don't communicate much.”

“The Scheme is very successful with only some minor difficulties in ensuring co-ordination of efforts (e.g. donations from other libraries, High Commission, etc).”

Those libraries who never get a response may like to contact me so I can follow up the original twinning understanding. For those with freight problems I will let you know if funds become available. Those who cannot afford overseas telephone calls, please let me know - I may be contacting their twin about another matter. Above all, please keep up the communication.

Finally, thank you sincerely to all the participating libraries. From this survey it seems we can be satisfied that our efforts are worthwhile.

**JACQUELINE ELLIOTT**

Coordinator, Pacific Twinning Scheme

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