

# THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILLOUGHBY

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REFERENCE

## Media Release

### **Willoughby Library welcomes new technology!**

**BIMS™**, a newly developed electronic Chinese OPAC system for the general public, is making its debut at Willoughby City Library. It is the first bilingual catalogue system in public libraries in New South Wales. An official launch of this latest technology will be held at the library at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1998, officiated by the Mayor of Willoughby City and the Chinese Consul General of Sydney. A demonstration of the system will be held following the launch.

Willoughby City has an enviable reputation as a 'city of diversity', largely owing to the varied ethnic mix living in, and visiting the city. Over the years, the Chinese population in Willoughby City has grown to 9.2% of the total population in this city (1996 ABS Census). The Chinese collection is now the largest among the twelve community language collections in the library, with 7,500 items (approximately 4,000 titles). The loan figure reached 97,123 in 1996-97, representing 10.7% of the total loans in the library.

At present, the Chinese collection is catalogued in Romanised transliteration using the Han-yu Pin-yin system. This system is also used by most public libraries in Sydney. However, most Chinese readers prefer to use original script to avoid ambiguity, as one word in Han-yu Pin-yin may represent different Chinese characters. Han-yu Pin-yin is not very popular amongst the Chinese readers, and only a small proportion of them can use it. This means that in many cases, borrowers are not able to find the required item in the catalogue, nor can they understand the overdue notice sent to them. To overcome these problems and to meet the needs of Chinese readers in the library, the library's Ethnic Services Librarian, Mrs. Angelina Yeung, along with Kairos International Pty. Ltd., initiated the development of an electronic Chinese online public catalogue system (BIMS™ Book Information Management System).

Willoughby City Library successfully obtained a library development grant from the State Government last year to develop and implement this bilingual electronic catalogue for the Chinese collection.

With the establishment of BIMS™, library patrons are now able to retrieve the bibliographical information of the library's Chinese collection in 3 different ways:

1. By using **English** to search for translated best sellers
2. By using **Han-yu Pin-yin**
3. By writing in **Chinese original script** on a sensitive input pad

With this facility, Chinese patrons of Willoughby City library will have easy access to the library and information services and the library staff will be able to assist Chinese patrons with requests, reservations and overdue enquiries as never before. The library hopes to be able to extend this technology to include Japanese, Korean and other non-Roman script language collections in the future.

**Willoughby Library's address is 407 Victoria Ave. Chatswood, 2067.**

**Please phone 9777-7900 for any enquiries.**

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Applause from the guests as the first hand-written Chinese character appears on the computer screen during a search demonstration.



The famous Chinese martial art writer Liang Yu Sheng is having a try on BIMS searching for his own collections in Willoughby Library.