

Whitehorse Gazette

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Access via Chinese characters

VICTORIA'S first Chinese character catalogue was launched at The Pines Library last week.

The BIMS system, a Chinese catalogue for the general public, will revolutionise information retrieval, says Doncaster MP Victor Perton.

Launching the new system for the Whitehorse-Manningham Regional Library Corporation, Mr Perton said State Government funding had made its installation possible and would also allow Manningham's Chinese book collection to be developed.

"Using the BIMS system, library patrons can basically write in Chinese original script on a sensitive input pad to retrieve information about the Chinese collection," Mr Perton said.

"This is a dramatic step forward for those whose primary reading language is Chinese."

The system was developed by Sydney-based company Kairos International using a hand-writing recognition tech-

nique, which is only in use at one other library, in New South Wales.

The company is also working on adapting the system for use with other languages, including Greek.

"This new technology responds to the needs of our multicultural society," Mr Perton said.

The launch of the new system coincided with the launch of a new collection of Chinese language material at The Pines Library.

Multicultural services librarian Alannah McCann said people using the Chinese collection would be able to retrieve information in three ways — by using English to search for translated best-sellers, by using the existing Han-yu Pin-yin system or by writing in Chinese original script on a sensitive input pad.

A Chinese book collection is also available at Box Hill Library.

— JODIE MENZIES