

Introducing the Electronic Library !

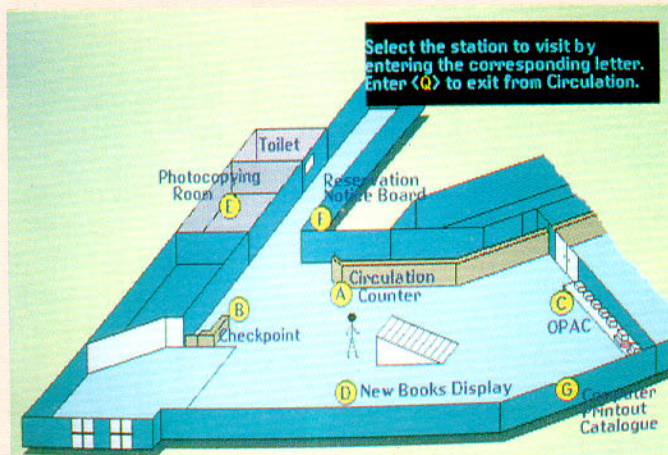
One of the first glimpses which all this year's new students had of the NP Library was via the computer screen. These new members of the NP family were the first to experience an electronic "tour" of the library through Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) software packages.

The Library has been conducting a comprehensive user education programme for all new students during the

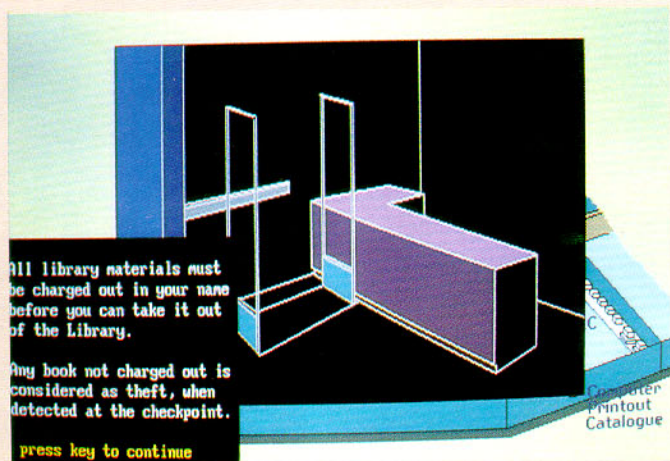
first six weeks of every academic year. Every student goes through two orientation sessions of two hours each. One session introduces them to the facilities, services, and the varied resources of the Library. The other teaches students the effective use of the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), which is the enquiry module of the Library's computer system.

This unique interface not only attracts and holds the students' attention, but also enhances their comprehension by helping them to relate the information on the services and facilities to specific locations within the library. The CAI program is, in fact, a simulated electronic "tour" of the library, with an electronic "guide" always on hand to help.

The CAI program runs on one of the Local Area Networks in the Library, to which 31 microcomputers are connected. The log-in procedure is automated, and no instructor's intervention is necessary. This first version of the program has proven the feasibility of using such software for user education in the library context, and work is in progress to implement a new release. Another CAI program for OPAC instruction is currently being developed. **NP**



A 3-D view of the library on screen gives viewers an electronic "tour" of the library.



Explanations are heavily supplemented throughout by graphics.