INCITE is the news magazine of the Australian Library and Information Association. It presents perspectives on issues relating to library and information science.

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Cooroy Library in Queensland was a feature case study at the recent Public Library Design forum hosted by the State Library of Queensland. See our report, page 7.

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“Design shapes the way we live. So it ought to serve everyone.”
- Eva Maddox, interior architect and designer, co-founder, Archeworks
ALIA pushes for international copyright treaty

There is no doubt that, in our digital world, enabling clients to access information within an increasingly complex copyright and rights holders’ management framework is a challenge. In Australia we are reasonably fortunate to have well-established copyright legislation allowing libraries, at least in the print environment, to carry out our core role. But this framework is increasingly challenged to meet the legal, policy and user expectations in a digital world. Perhaps more than ever before the voice of libraries in this debate needs to be heard in support of the democratisation of information.

The International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) has developed a Draft Treaty on Copyright Exceptions and Limitations for Libraries and Archives to argue for a binding international instrument on copyright exceptions and limitations to enable libraries to preserve their collections, support education and research, and lend materials. The IFLA Draft Treaty defines the requirements of the international library community and the agenda for the November meeting of the World International Property Organisation (WIPO) will include a three day meeting on exceptions and limitations for libraries and archives.

Working with the Australian Libraries Copyright Council and the Australian Digital Alliance, ALIA is lobbying the Federal Government to make our support of the Draft Treaty known so that the needs of Australian libraries and archives are well understood for the forthcoming WIPO discussion. More details on the Draft Treaty can be found at www.alia.org.au/copyright.

ALIA Conference format to change

I recently attended the ALIA Top End Symposium in Darwin and had the privilege of hearing some inspiring and interesting presentations as well as the opportunity to meet members from across the Northern Territory. The quality of the program delivered within a cost-effective format underscored for me the validity of the recent decision taken by the Board of Directors to adopt a new model for ALIA conferences.

As mentioned in my last Frontline, the volunteer effort required and the costs of holding our flagship Biennial, Information Online, Library Technicians and New Librarians Symposium conferences are creating sustainability concerns. The Board, at its September 2011 meeting, agreed to a number of significant changes to the way in which ALIA conferences are created, managed and delivered.

The Board agreed to maintain a separate event targeted at those new to the profession, still titled New Librarians Symposium, but aligned with the Information Online Conference held every two years. The details of this and the next symposium are still to be finalised, but a satellite event is favoured. This alignment will enable those new to the profession to participate in a large conference, experience the trade show and mix more broadly with established members, while also ensuring both the opportunity and support needed for early career-stage members to present papers and participate in professional debate.

A separate Library Technicians biennial event will continue to be held but the format, venue style and management structure will be modified to ensure that we continue to create a relevant, high quality program at a reduced cost so as to maximise the opportunities for members to attend. The ALIA National Library Technicians Group will be organising the 2013 conference. Dates and details for all our upcoming conferences are available at www.alia.org.au/conferences/2013.

ALIA will also work closely with convention bureaus across Australia to competitively source value for money venues and locations for our major conferences. Members of conference organising committees will be drawn from across the country, providing increased opportunities for members to be a part of this important work. The role of ALIA staff in support of the organising committees is also being redefined.

As with all new ways of doing things, future Boards will monitor the outcome of this new approach, but we are confident this new strategy will continue to deliver the high quality conferences which are highly valued by ALIA members.

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YOUR INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT

Legal information for newly arrived migrants

The NSW Legal Assistance Forum (NLAF) has launched an online catalogue of legal resources specifically targeted for newly arrived migrants and refugees. It lists written, audio and visual formats in a variety of languages and website links for downloadable resources; plus information about the stage in the settlement process at which the material is most appropriate. www.nlaf.org.au/reports/new_arrivals.html.

Europe’s National Librarians support Open Data licensing

The Conference of European National Librarians (CENL) has voted overwhelmingly to support the open licensing of their data. CENL represents Europe’s 46 national libraries. Support for open licensing will mean access to the vast quantities of reliable data through Europe’s national library catalogues and open up opportunities to create new relationships between data sets. CENL believe taking this step will put “national libraries at the heart of innovations in digital applications.”

ebrary partners with James Bennett

ebrary has partnered with James Bennett with the aim of making ebooks more readily available to Australasian libraries. They’ve also signed up a new publishing partner – Australian Academic Press – a niche academic publisher for the behavioural sciences.

State Library NSW launches Jewish digital resource

The State Library of NSW has been working to preserve their unique collection of materials relating to Jewish life in Australia and has now launched the collection online. It covers cultural, economic, religious and sporting contributions made by the Jewish community and will also eventually include oral histories of Holocaust survivors who have settled in this country. The project has been supported by funding from the Australia-Israel Chamber of Commerce. www.sl.nsw.gov.au/discover_collections.
Nothing ever stays the same

When I talk about change in libraries I often use the term ‘evolution’. Incremental change, advancements and improvements is what we will always continue to see in our libraries, with our customer expectations, with our services, facilities and with everything we do.

Some libraries and library staff though are taking it a step further, being at the forefront of significant changes and a very real ‘revolution’ in our libraries and the profession. They inspire us, lead us, and challenge us to new and greater things. A few of those stories are in this edition of INCITE. Australians should be proud that their libraries are recognised as world class. I hope that these stories inspire you to create, evolve and revolutionise in your own library or in your own professional career.

The evolution of the library and information services profession and our future has been discussed at the ALIA National Advisory Congress meetings during October and November this year. This discussion will continue into 2012 through the ALIA Board, our committees and our groups. Our Association can only be as strong as its members. How and where the Association places volunteer energy, finances and organisational focus is not just the Board’s responsibility - it is for all members.

You will notice in this INCITE a call for nominations for Board of Director positions. It is important that members with leadership skills, time, energy and commitment nominate for these positions. And please take the time to update your contact details with us at membership@alia.org.au so that a valid email address can be used for the election voting in early 2012. In past years only a small percentage of the membership has voted in Board elections and yet it is this Board that must steer the Association forward. It is this Board who decide priorities and ensure the services you expect are provided efficiently and effectively. So have your say by voting - it is another way for you to contribute to your Association and make sure your opinion on how the Association should progress is heard.

As Margaret Allen has indicated in her Frontline column, we are moving to make changes to the ALIA conference arrangements. I hope that you are considering submitting an abstract for the Biennial Conference 2012 (Call for Papers are due 30th November) and more information will be available soon regarding ALIA Information Online 2013. Conferences form a significant part of the annual ALIA budget and they must remain sustainable for all concerned to be viable. As I wrote earlier, nothing ever stays the same, it’s always evolving. And that’s how it should be.

Sue Hutley
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Have your say by nominating for, and voting in, the 2012 ALIA Board elections. Your vote decides how ALIA will work to support your profession and your career.

ILRS Code prices revised

Effective from October 1st 2011, a new schedule of prices for Interlibrary Resource Sharing have been announced. The new model uses a Consumer Price Index-based model and will be reviewed every five years. Express service (two hour turnaround) costs increased from $39.60 to $49.50 plus delivery charges, Rush service (24 hour turnaround) increased from $26.40 to $33 plus delivery and the Core service (within 4 working days) increased from $13.20 to $16.50 plus delivery. The Express Post delivery charge is now $8.30 while Express Post/ equivalent for loans up to 3kg has increased to $12.40. The Libraries Australia Document Delivery Payments Gateway will reflect these prices as the default charge.

Silver pins say thank you

Silver pins are one way ALIA says thank you to the volunteers who do so much for their colleagues serving on group, conference and advisory committees. ALIA members who volunteer for five terms or more are eligible and peer or self-nomination can be completed online at www.alia.org.au/awards/silver.pin.recipients.

Thank you!

A big thank you to all our sponsors for the Library Technicians Conference 2011 and New Librarians Symposium 5 in Perth in September. Perth Convention Bureau (social media sponsors for both events), NLS5 Silver Sponsor Eclipse Office Industries, and event sponsors Ulverscroft Australia, Innovation and Business Skills Australia, Curtin and Murdoch Universities, the University of Western Australia, Envisionware, Britannica, OCLC and the State Library of Western Australia. Your support makes it all possible. We hope to see you again at the 2012 Biennial Conference, Discovery, where we hope the library and information services sector will join us to celebrate ALIA’s 75th anniversary.

Your ALIA Snapshot

Call for abstracts page 5.
Design consultant Kevin Hennah is just about to mark his tenth year working with libraries in Australia and internationally. The long-time retail visual merchandising expert turned workshop presenter, author of Victorian Public Libraries’ Image Handbook and featured author of Re-think! Ideas for Inspired School Library Design, has been pondering what real library design revolution should mean.

His thinking has included consideration of trends that are now truly mainstream – the issue of sustainability, changes in how our patrons use our libraries (from hooking up to the wireless connection to being allowed – even encouraged – to get in a group and make some noise) and the growing popularity of added facilities such as cafes.

But even with all this innovation, Kevin says the risk of just building a trendier version of what we already have is apparently still strong.

“In terms of culture and visual merchandising, there are pre-internet libraries and post-internet libraries,” Kevin says. “This has nothing to do with the year the library was built. I am referring to libraries that have simply added the internet to the existing collection and left those resources merchandising in a traditional format. Rows of spine-out books with traditional signage does not compete with Google! There’s plenty of life left in print, but we can’t present it in a traditional format and expect to achieve the results we did prior to introducing the internet and other new technologies.”

“Put everything under the magnifying glass in the design stages,” he advises. “Ask yourself; is this layout, system, display and promotional strategy still relevant? I call this cultural weeding.”

And he has the figures to prove changing the traditional approach really works. The advent of front-facing displays in libraries, for example, is proven to assist in reversing downward trends in non-fiction loans - even in school libraries where homework cut and pasted from the internet to the existing collection and left those resources merchandising in a traditional format. Rows of spine-out books with traditional signage does not compete with Google! There’s plenty of life left in print, but we can’t present it in a traditional format and expect to achieve the results we did prior to introducing the internet and other new technologies.”

At the moment he’s working with a school library in Kuala Lumpur where they are exploring organising the whole collection by genre rather than physical form. In a post-internet world, this makes more sense than ever, not least because it tends to put the internet in its place in the minds of patrons – amongst a variety of resources, not replacing them.

After many years in retail, including the great days of The Body Shop, clients including Virgin Mobile, Australia Post and Oshkosh, and now a decade working with libraries, Kevin says there is something very special about working with staff in libraries, regardless of which sector they are in. “They are passionate and I love that passion,” says Kevin.

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Kevin cites five critical factors in the design of a truly revolutionary library space to share:

1. **Aim for total flexibility.** This means adjustable, moveable fittings, from shelves to service counters, to enable you to reinvent your library over time to meet your patron’s needs. (And avoid using big expense items such as carpeting to delineate areas – that just cuts down on the essential flexibility because if you move the shelving and furniture it’s going to look plain weird!)

2. **Maximise your impulse loan potential.** Use every opportunity for front-facing displays and find a way to organise your shelves that isn’t in traditional aisles. It’s about enticing your patrons into the space and showing off what you have.

3. **De-clutter.** There’s a world of difference between just weeding the shelves and freeing up space you then use to actively engage with patrons through displays of the great stuff you have. Most libraries have a great deal more in their collection than can be effectively showcased. As Kevin says, “rows of shelves of book spines are truly a ‘pre-internet’ library notion.

Each month, OPINION features contributions from invited guest writers. The opinions expressed in this column do not necessarily reflect those of the Australian Library and Information Association.
Dear Editor
Thank you Philip Kent for your thoughtful and polite reminder to all of the way it was in “our day” (INCITE, September 2011). It would seem a reminder like this is timely. So many of the matters that you mention as common practice and that served as a thoughtful, professional and very useful networking training ground for the likes of you and me appear to be missing in the profession as it stands today. You mention:

• How so many staff members at large institutions were almost automatically members of our professional association. I understand that this is not always the case today.

• How we “networked long before the term was in currency” through Committee meetings, to which I would add the steep learning curve these meetings provided in standards of recording meetings, conducting debate, speaking professionally and being well informed before one dared to open one’s mouth, and being courteous in formal meeting settings.

• The loss of “professional connection” with the demise of such meetings – to which I can only agree. The meetings gave a sense of professional worth and strength and certainly assisted in times when, for example, employers were hiring librarians without the requirement of “eligible for professional membership of ALIA” as part of the advertisement. You don’t see the latter too often these days and as you write, this is the “official standard”.

Lest anyone think that this is yet another oldie with a professional gripe, there could be none more astounded than I, when I gave a bit (or is it ‘byte’) speech at the New Norcia Library Lecture in WA recently, on the philosophical underpinnings of our proud and worthy profession under the rubric of the information commons. How heartening it was to have so many colleagues express their appreciation of this reminder of our true worth and meaning. And if you want a brief reminder of why librarians exist and should continue their proud journey then please read “What librarians & Google are for…” (INCITE, August 2011, p. 4) for starters.

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4. Before you select an architect, ask the contenders what the word ‘library’ means to them. If their notion is outdated, you are going to have to either change their mind or re-educate them before you get started. And any architect or designer you choose must share your vision and enthusiasm if you are going to create something really revolutionary together.

5. (And this is actually Kevin’s number one priority): Insist on 3D-rendering of everything during the design process. Think Grand Designs. That computer-generated building you can actually watch yourself walking through isn’t just a fancy trick; it’s the way you can be sure you and your architect are imagining the same new library and it saves you from those nasty surprises once the building starts (I thought it would be higher/larger/smaller...). A retail or even a domestic project these days will routinely be 3D-rendered and a project as complex as a library definitely should be.
AWESOME FROM START TO FINISH: LIBTECH 2011

Back to Basics Conference Convenor Susan Courtland shares her personal highlights.

In the Nyoongar language, ‘Moorditj’ means awesome. The ‘Moorditj Mob Dancers’ from Wesley College accompanied by Olman Walley on the didgeridoo, welcomed LibTech delegates with an awesome dance, setting the tone for an amazing conference opening exuding warmth and humour; a buzz that carried through the entire conference. I acknowledge too our wonderful emcee Grant Stone, radio personality Russell Woolf for his inspiring words in opening the conference and ALIA President Margaret Allen for her welcome address.

Back to Basics – Perth 2011 offered a forum to explore our fundamental skills and share how we meet the needs of clients. As a service-based industry with skills, visions and professional values, we are specialists in the management of information and the use of tools and technology inter-connected with our clients. Hence each presenter for Back to Basics was chosen to reflect the three dynamics of the conference: personal development, professional development and client services. I thank all of our wonderful speakers for sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm towards an excellent program.

My personal highlights included magician Rob Townsend’s performance at the reception and our opening keynote speaker, Rachel Green, who added energy to the room, inspiring confidence in delegates to deal with difficult clients and to network with ease. A skilled educator and presenter, Rachel’s sessions were informative and made learning so much fun.

Plenary speaker Andy Wright delivered 60 minutes of pure pleasure in the art of storytelling titled, Telling Tall Tales and True: The Art of Successful Storytelling. All enjoyed a very entertaining session, interspersed with audience participation, including ALIA President Margaret Allen performing a series of star jumps on stage.

Elaina Norlin from Broward County Florida delivered an insightful keynote presentation on the state of libraries in America and the importance of marketing in keeping the library and information industry alive, while Sarah Garnett’s moving and inspirational presentation on the Benjamin Andrew Footpath Library received a standing ovation from the audience, many of whom were moved to tears.

The superb conference dinner and dance at the Hyatt will long be remembered, as will the Back to the Future open forum panel discussion, a joint event with the NLS5 conference delegates. And finally, the announcement of Judy Allan as the Library Technician of the Year 2011 was a very special highlight: the best kept secret leading into the awards.

I acknowledge and thank our wonderful sponsors, including Ulverscroft, Innovation and Business Skills Australia, Murdoch University, Curtin University, Envisionware, the University of WA, and Perth Convention Bureau, and our exhibitors for their generous investment in the profession by supporting our conference, and thank our magnificent delegates for their participation, sharing in the excitement and embracing all that Back to Basics had to offer.

In closing the 2011 conference, I invited the 15 members of the LibTech Committee to join me on stage to complete what has been an incredible journey of learning, self-discovery and friendship. It has been a privilege working alongside such a wonderful group of library and information professionals. Leading such a dynamic team has been a very rewarding experience and I have benefited immensely in the areas of leadership, events management and decision-making. It has also been a wonderful experience working in partnership with ALIA on this event and I thank them for the opportunity.

Perth 2011 is being acclaimed by delegates as the best National Library Technician Conference to date. We are very proud of what we have achieved; it was an awesome Conference.

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The best-kept secret of Libtech 2011: Judy Allan, Library Technician of the Year

ALIA Biennial
Sydney 2012

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Tuesday 10 – Friday 13 July 2012
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Metamorphosis: What will you become today? That was the question posed at ALIA New Librarians Symposium 5. Convenor Steve McQuade reports.

NLS5 ran back-to-back with the ALIA National Library and Information Technicians’ Conference which took place earlier that week. This made possible a collaboration which revealed a shared enthusiasm and passion for our profession and raised some interesting challenges around how we perceive each other within the industry.

A satellite program preceded NLS5 and coincided with some unseasonably wet and stormy spring weather but this did not deter our delegates from enjoying a variety of library tours and workshops.

Delegates then converged on the Pan Pacific Hotel for the first official conference session (a joint event with the Library Technicians Conference) the Back to the Future Forum. Barbara Combes chaired this lively discussion, with Grant Stone, Elaina Norlin, Julia Lawrinson, Matthew Allen, Garry Conroy-Cooper and David Lee King adding their perspectives and responses to provocative questions. This event not only showcased excellent speakers but provided delegates from both conferences the chance to network with each other and with influential figures from the West Australian library community at the Remixer social event which followed.

The technical program for the 5th New Librarians Symposium continued on Saturday and 166 NLS5 delegates from around the country had a great time listening, presenting, discussing and workshopping. Keynote speakers Mal Booth, Kathryn Greenhill, Kate Davis and David Lee King gave inspiring, sage, thought-provoking and visionary presentations. The symposium provided the opportunity for number of delegates to present their first papers or lead workshops with great ideas and case studies. (Papers will be available on the website shortly, as will pod-casts of all the keynote speakers.)

Both ‘digital native’ and digital immigrant delegates alike made good use of the venue’s wifi facilities with over 100 people logging in to the network on Saturday morning. This meant that the so-called ‘back-channel’ was a very engaging place to be, with lots of commentary and discussion as well as photos and videos from the sessions being shared in real time.

Of course, none of this would be possible, if not for the contributions of our fantastic sponsors including our Silver Sponsor Eclipse Office Industries, our Social Media Sponsor Perth Convention Bureau (who have been great supporters of ours and of the Library Technicians Conference all the way along), OCLC for our lanyards, EnvisionWare for our notepads and pens, Britannica for our volunteer t-shirts and State Library of WA for our USB satchels and for generally supporting the symposium and its committee.

Delegates and committee members alike learnt much from the NLS5 experience including the importance of continuous learning and conscious evolution. This is true for individuals, organisations and even conferences - can’t wait to see the next metamorphosis of the New Librarians’ Symposium!

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SHOW US WHAT YOU’VE GOT

For this issue of INCITE we asked members to share stories and pictures of their evolving libraries. We were inundated with spiffy pictures and news of projects ranging from brand spanking new buildings to modest refits and inspiring tales of marrying the finer points of the old with the exciting aspects of the new.

There are strong themes through the contributions you will read here from ‘survivors’ of projects of just about any size and they are echoed by the experts. INCITE spoke to library designer Kevin Hennah for our OPINION column and in collating these contributions we also contacted a number of designers. In terms of what goes in the building, it’s to be expected that current interior design trends will be showing up but the extra challenge for library-specific design of course is that it’s multi-use (and heavy use at that) and only rarely do we get a blank canvas to play with. Often there are heritage issues involved (and some of our contributors this month have shared a few tips about managing those challenges). Big dollar budgets are even rarer. We’ve had to be clever.

CK Design’s Cecilia Kugler summed up the key trends she is seeing after 23 years in the business for us – they include redesigning service areas and spaces for multiple functions and using moveable, flexible configurations to allow for future change. She also highlights transparency as a critical aspect of a successful design. Transparency, in this sense, is about engaging with our patrons by opening up areas to showcase our collections and services inside the building, but it’s also about what happens before they even get in the door.

“It’s important to connect with your streetscape,” she says. It’s all about enticing the passersby to join in. And it’s all about taking away the barriers. In almost every library refurbishment described in this issue you will read about the old forbidding and formal service desk disappearing in favour of a communal place for staff to sit with patrons. The functional aspects, such as returns, are being tucked out of sight, says Cecilia. They have to be there and they have to work but they are no longer the focus of attention.

“For years the focus of library design was on the quantitative,” Cecilia points out. “It was all about how many books and how many bodies. Now library design is people-centric. We know more isn’t better and we’re designing spaces for people first and then for formats.”

The design brief is where it all starts. Cecilia says a good brief is not only about the attributes you want your library to have but is also clear about how you will measure your success.

In the infamous ‘bigger picture’, this trend towards what patrons want from us coming before our logistical considerations is a natural partner to the technology that is giving us multiple format options and new ways to access them. Unleashed from the confines of format, the modern library can truly be a hub for its community with powers to rival the Tardis. That’s real evolution.

Note: Space precludes us from including all of these submissions this time but we especially want to thank everyone who responded. The topic has been so popular that we’re going to revisit it in 2012.

LIBRARIAN MEETS ARCHITECT – A FORUM FOR ALL

Over 130 library and local government managers and design professionals gathered at The Edge, State Library of Queensland’s digital culture centre, on 29 September for a forum focussing on the latest trends in public library design.

A highlight of the forum was the opportunity for interchanges between librarians and architects, which everyone agreed was mutually beneficial. As one Sydney architect noted, “It was a very good insight into the world of library and library design”, while one of the librarians present called the event “an excellent mix of inspirational and practical content” and said they wished for an opportunity to go through the details of the ten ‘new landmark’ libraries with both library colleagues and architects of their current building project present.

Louise Schaper, who led the Library Journal’s New Landmark Libraries project in the United States, provided a tour of the very best public library projects of the last five years. Louise opened discussion on several themes that would recur during the day, including green design, refurbishing for new models of customer service, and improving useability through effective wayfinding and branding.

New libraries in Gungahlin in the ACT and Cooroy in Queensland were highlighted and there were presentations on developing learning spaces, design briefs, marketing design for small communities, and the impact of natural disasters on library design.

It was the first chance that many of the interstate and New Zealand visitors had to see State Library’s The Edge and the Asia Pacific Design Library, where the forum wound down with drinks after the final session. A bus tour of four outstanding Brisbane library projects included Brisbane City Council’s Fairfield Library, which was destroyed in the January floods and reopened by June.

Presentations will be available on State Library of Queensland’s website soon at www.slq.qld.gov.au and design information is also available at www.slq.qld.gov.au/info/publib/build.

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If building or renovating is one of life’s most stressful moments, the staff at Hobsons Bay in Victoria suspect they must be gluttons for punishment. Ten years ago, Hobsons Bay library buildings were below standard. Today, the council is midway through construction of its third major library build within five years.

Altona North Community Library was completed in March 2010 and could well be considered a good looking library. For us, Altona North is all about the customer experience. It has an abundance of natural light, monitored fresh air quality and a retail-style, flexible layout with very efficient use of space. With a small footprint of land (3,000sq m) the facility boasts 530sq.m of library space, two community meeting rooms, a 16 PC training room and state-of-the-art facilities for people with a disability. The recent opening of the UCAn Café added the aroma of freshly baked muffins and espresso coffee and we knew we had achieved our vision of building the ‘community lounge room’. Here’s what we learned along the way:

Get involved

Nobody understands your ‘business’ or your community better than you or your staff. Be a part of developing the design brief, the architect’s selection and the Project Control Group (PCG). During the Altona Meadows Library planning in 2004, I initially met resistance in joining the project meetings. But who else would articulate the role and function of the modern library? I was soon sitting beside project engineers and managers, architects and builders, quantity surveyors and hydraulic consultants at the PCG meetings from inception right through until completion. This management structure is now into its third incarnation with the Williamstown Library construction.

For Altona North, the team knew the library of the future had to relate to the retail environment without losing the traditional elements that the community valued. At the design phase, the meetings with the architect outlined that vision clearly. The architect also needed to understand the functional workings of a busy library. Being involved at these meetings, has meant the rectification of countless potential mistakes or misinterpretations that we would have had to live with for a long time.

Our approach to building planning and construction is a lot of work. But the effort is well worth it for the quality and functionality of the result and value delivered back to the community.

“With an architect who listens, consultation is meaningful.”

Listen and interpret

Choose your architect well. An architect who can listen and interpret is gold. An architect, of course, wants their design to be enduring and to make a statement, but the skill of a really good architect lies in their ability to interpret the aspirations of the community in the design.

With an architect who listens, consultation is meaningful. Consultation at the different levels with staff, the regular users, the irregular users, the Friends, the Advisory committees, Councillors and targeted community groups is such an important part of the process. The architect can hear their concerns and then reflect these in the design. So allow plenty of time in the planning for this to happen.

The manager that is involved can also guide the project team through the Council communication protocols and processes. A good relationship built on trust and communication will ensure that the finished building is one that all stakeholders can be proud of.

To get the best value, get hands on.

The library team did much of the research around determining the look and feel, including research visiting other libraries and drawing upon our own experiences as shoppers/consumers. With Altona Meadows, we had a limited budget so enlisted the assistance of a space planner for the layout but sourced our furniture and equipment directly from the factory. With Altona North, we researched the self -serve shopping trends, the café culture, and the retail environment. We wanted to achieve a comfortable but smart finish - a finish that would be welcoming. For Altona North, we researched the self -serve shopping trends, the café culture, and the retail environment. We wanted to achieve a comfortable but smart finish - a finish that would be welcoming.
Macquarie University has just completed a new library building that features Australia’s first Automated Storage and Retrieval System (ASRS). It’s been a huge undertaking, taking two years and costing a total of $97m - and the team have learned some valuable lessons along the way.

The use of automated storage and retrieval systems has become increasingly common in major universities and libraries in the USA and Europe but Macquarie University is the first Australian library to install the technology.

University Librarian Maxine Brodie said the decision to install the system was part of creating a library that would be able to meet client needs for decades to come.

The ASRS system uses four stacker cranes to access steel storage bins housing 1.3 million items in less than a seventh of the floor space that would be required using traditional shelving. This has meant the library’s entire collection is now located on one site for the first time – and there’s room to grow.

Dematic’s Manager Direct & Wholesale, Darren Rawlinson, said implementing the ASRS at Macquarie University had been a pleasant change from working in warehouses and distribution centres.

“It was exciting to work on such a ground-breaking project in Australia. Macquarie University’s new library is world class in every way, and we are proud to have played a part in bringing Australia’s first automated library storage and retrieval solution online.”

The installation of automated retrieval is only one of a number of technological and architectural innovations in the Macquarie University Library project, which was officially opened by Chancellor Michael Egan and Vice Chancellor Professor Stephen Schwartz on Monday August 8, 2011.

“Based on overseas experience with automated library storage and retrieval systems, we expect the easy, convenient access the ARC provides will actually increase book lending rates over time,” said Ms Brodie.

“I’m thrilled to be a part of it. It’s a real investment in the future of the University and our students.”

INCITE asked Macquarie University Library’s Communications Coordinator Brendan Krige to share the four most important lessons the Macquarie team learnt during the project.

**Have clarity about what you want**

There will be many things that arise in the long process of building a new library that will distract you from your original plans. Refer back to your strategic aims and business needs to ensure your project is meeting your needs, not the wants of others.

**Expect setbacks along the way**

While building projects are notorious for delays, it’s not just bad weather that causes setbacks. A broken crane at a port delayed vital ASRS equipment, and then the Japanese tsunami affected the supply of photocopiers and printers. There were also changes in key staff that impacted the project.

**You can’t please everyone all the time**

There are hundreds of decisions that need to be made in a new library project, and not everyone will like your furniture choices, colour schemes, floor plans – the list goes on. Make the best decision you can based on the research and evidence you have (and your budget of course).

**Build it and they will come!**

Even with seating and computer capacity doubled, staff were hearing the old refrain, “I can’t find a seat anywhere” within two weeks of opening. In the first month of operation, Macquarie’s new library saw the average daily door count soar to over 9,000 visits, compared to an average of around 5,000 for the old library. Where were all these students before? (Who says libraries are obsolete?)

Brendan Krige
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IN BRIEF

Ingleburn Branch Library, Campbelltown City Library

All building projects are ultimately exercises in compromise, and where heritage considerations are involved, these compromises can come from unexpected quarters. When Campbelltown City Library in New South Wales embarked upon the redevelopment of its Ingleburn Branch Library, integrating the neighbouring heritage-listed School of Arts building was one of the major challenges.

During the consultation process it was clear that the community had a deep attachment to the School of Arts building, whose history included roles as a dance hall, cinema and meeting place so the final development designs sought to include artefacts, shadow lines of dance steps in the floor, and retention of the film projector apertures in the wall and other elements that would conjure the past uses of the building while enabling a more contemporary use of the space.

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Jump in loans at Sandringham

The Sandringham branch of the Bayside Library Service badly needed a refurbishment after 26 years of solid service. Key changes included reducing the size of the service desk to incorporate self-service, creating inviting seating and bringing the look of the library into the 21st century. The new design is reader-centred, collection-focused and aims to reduce the barrier between staff and patrons. Child-height shelving in the junior library has encouraged a jump of 18% in picture book loans.

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Avondale Heights Library and Learning Centre in the City of Moonee Valley in Victoria opened in September 2010. The visually striking and colourful building, inspired by artist Howard Arkley’s bold and vibrant paintings of suburbia is now a highly visible landmark in the municipality and the sustainable design has already won an Australian Institute of Project Management 2011 Sustainable Project Award, and been nominated for a Melbourne Design Award.

This project was made possible with funding of $3.6 million by the Victorian Government through Skills Victoria. The facility houses a relocated library combined with community and learning spaces.

A library was not in the initial design brief developed by Skills Victoria. The original concept was for a Community Learning Centre responsive to social, leisure, information and learning needs of residents. Halfway through construction a decision was made to integrate a nearby existing branch library. This change of plans shortened planning timeframes and created the extra challenge of retrofitting a building halfway through construction.

Twelve months on, the new Library and Learning Centre has been an outstanding success, with significant increases in circulation and programming statistics. The learning focus of the new centre has created opportunities for delivering informal and formal education to the community and through developing partnerships with local education institutions, we have been able to offer nationally accredited and certificate level courses.

A sponsorship arrangement developed with the East Keilor Community Bank Branch of the Bendigo Bank increased the number of public computers available. There has also been a high-level of interest across Council in the new facility, which has in turn created a positive profile for the Library and Learning Department.

Along with all of the challenges, a lot has been learnt – so here is some practical advice if you are starting out on the adventure that is a new library building:

• don’t expect it to be an easy process
• understand and try to address the concerns of staff – everyone deals with change in different ways, so don’t underestimate the effect it can have
• toss around ideas with the designers and architect – have open conversations about what you want, your core business and workflows as often they will come up with solutions you hadn’t thought of
• high-level support within your organisation is essential – we have been lucky to have a great level of interest in the project, both during development and since opening
• Build good working relationships with the project team – there is a huge benefit to having effective relationships with the architect, project manager and site manager
• design flexible spaces – a building designed to suit a range of purposes can adapt well.
• Use the opportunity to weed the collection (many of our customers assumed the collection was completely new, a result of rigorous weeding)
• maximise the use of face-out display – reducing the collection size and incorporating more display space has seen an increase in our circulation statistics
• think about acoustics – noise can become a problem, so include this in the design brief
• actively market the library – celebrate the achievements of a new facility
• address the community’s needs – include the community in the consultation process and implement programs and collections that address their core needs
• build partnerships – look for opportunities for ‘value adding’, both in the development of the physical building and facilities and delivering learning programs

To celebrate the success of the facility as a social hub, we marked the first birthday with a community festival. The next twelve months will be equally exciting, with the development of an atrium to extend the programming space of the library, made possible through a Victorian Government Living Libraries grant.

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There were two major challenges facing staff in renovating the main library located in Double Bay in 2011. The building, known as St Brigids, is heritage-listed which limits the architectural options available. They also faced the inherent challenges associated in introducing 21st century library facilities into a non-purpose built building as St Brigids was essentially a large family home built in 1871.

Our vision is for our library to be a place where customers are able to relax, enjoy their visit and make use of the enhanced technological facilities, including RFID self-check machines. The brief given to CK Design was to primarily take advantage of the natural beauty of the location for St Brigids, situated in Blackburn Gardens overlooking Sydney Harbour, and create a space that would become a community hub.

Previous renovations of St Brigids had resulted in the library interior being painted in heritage colours, with mushroom pink predominant. The entrance to the library was dominated by a large wooden staff desk and the wooden book shelves had seemed to grow like Topsy over the years, with many of the shelves now blocking the view over the gardens and harbour. The result was an interior which projected a formal approach to client interaction.

The new renovations saw the end of the traditional staff desk. This was replaced instead with a small round table at which staff and customers both sit, heralding a new ethos of inclusiveness for customers. Innovations have included the removal of some walls, the conversion of a major beam holding up the veranda into a seat and areas previously dominated by wooden bookshelves transformed into a study zone with wireless access. The study zone overlooks the gardens and has proved a popular place for students.

The interior of the library is now painted cream, enhancing the feeling of spaciousness and the renovations also unexpectedly uncovered a frieze of what appears to be Greek gods cavorting, located just outside the entrance to the youth reading room. The library was closed for approximately six weeks while the renovations took place and the wait was worth it as the feedback from the community has been fabulous.

At the library reopening on 12 September, gone was the sombre, formal library interior. Instead customers were greeted with a design interior that had a real wow factor; being light and airy and reflecting the harbourside location.

Looking back, perhaps the main lesson was not to underestimate the time it takes for building renovations to be completed. The library opening occurred one week after schedule. Staff had to learn to operate within ‘ordered disorder’, with a maze of boxes of books awaiting re-shelving among desks and new workflows required to accommodate the renovations. Staff showed initiative in ensuring that the public inconvenience was minimised. These efforts did not go unnoticed, as one member of the public noted, “Well done to everyone who has worked so hard – now enjoy”.

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Renovations revealed a classic frieze which is now a feature

A comfortable mix of heritage and modern design makes the most of the view

www.alia.org.au
ALIES IN TIMES OF EMERGENCY

ALIES is a library network that collaborates to fulfill the information needs of the emergency sector throughout Australia and New Zealand by exchanging and sharing knowledge, skills and resources, maintaining a distributed Australasian emergency management collection, and providing an expert information service. It is a network that truly represents the evolution of partnerships between libraries and the constituencies they serve.

“A key facet in the changing face of emergency services has been the developing role of libraries and information services. It is not possible for modern emergency services to operate efficiently without professional library support.” (Haldane, 1992). This quote is from the proceedings of the 1st Australian Emergency Service Librarians Workshop, held at Mt Macedon, Victoria in September 1991, an event which marked the beginning of the ALIES (Australasian Libraries in the Emergency Services).

Twenty years later, the ALIES acronym (pronounced ‘allies’) remains the same; however it now stands for Australasian Libraries in the Emergency Sector, a change that reflects an increased awareness of the interdependencies of the emergency response agencies with other government agencies.

In keeping with the Prevention Preparedness Response Recovery (PPRR) framework, ALIES members have actively engaged in broadening the membership base of the network to reflect a ‘whole-of-agencies’ and ‘all-hazards’ approach to emergency management. Membership of the network has increased from 30 libraries in 1991 to 47 libraries in 2011.

Through the annual ALIES Conference, staff of member libraries gain professional development opportunities, broaden their focus and increase their knowledge in information management principles and practices. These meetings also help strengthen networks, build partnerships and increase knowledge of the roles and interrelationships of parent organizations, facilitating coordinated sharing and dissemination of information throughout the Australian and New Zealand emergency and safety sector.

The 2011 ALIES Conference, titled Celebrating the Past, Creating the Future, marked the 20th anniversary of the formation of ALIES. A highlight of this conference was a panel presentation by five founding members.

“It must have been about October 1990, as I had only been working at the Melbourne Fire Brigade for three months,” Nina McPherson said in her opening address, when she and Coralie Jenkins from the Country Fire Authority Library went to visit Rob Fleming, who had been the librarian at the Australian Counter Disaster College for years.

“We were both greenhorns in this new world. The InMagic software had just been installed in our libraries. Thinking back, it was an element of luck that ALIES was formed. So here is the big ‘why?’ ‘Wouldn’t it be a good idea? said Coralie during our visit as we sat talking about the workshops that were held here. When Rob explained that the Commonwealth funded the workshops, almost in unison we asked, “how about the emergency services librarians? Couldn’t a workshop be held here, for them?” “Why not?” was Rob’s reply. And that’s how it all started.” Recurring issues have emerged over these 20 years, many familiar to the greater library community. These include such issues as marketing your library, proving its worth, resilience, and keeping up with changing technology. In line with latest technological trends, the 2011 Conference included a captivating presentation by Professor Scott Phelps on the ten most important books in the field of emergency management. The session was presented via Skype from JFK Airport in New York.

ALIES today is recognised as part of the National Capability Framework and has proved itself as a resilient voluntary government network. At the 2010 Conference, Mr. Martin Studdert of the Attorney General’s Department emphasised the importance of the ALIES Network and its role within the emergency sector. He declared that ALIES makes a difference, breaking down cultural barriers and providing “a shared stream of information... to share around the community... which leads to resilience”.

ALIES has influenced the broader emergency management sphere such as the National Spatial and Information Management Working Group and the Australian Fire Authority Council Knowledge Web. This is due to the hard work and commitment of individuals from member libraries. Librarians don’t shout - they reach out and quietly make an impact.

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Postscript: Members of ALIES would like to pay tribute to the former Library Manager of the Australian Institute of Criminology, Janet Smith, who worked tirelessly to progress and promote the work of ALIES. Janet sadly passed away January 2011. She is greatly missed.
A FACELIFT NOT INTENDED TO LAST

During the last 12 months the University of South Australia Library has undertaken minor facelifts at two of its campuses; both projects strictly limited by budget. One project was all about a temporary facelift for a building that will be repurposed in the near future but really showing its age, the other was an update in a heritage-listed building.

The buildings on the Magill campus of UniSA were built in the 1960s and are showing their age. But the imminent repurposing of the library building meant only a temporary fix was needed. There were some simple things we could do to refresh the tired look, including fresh paint (although we learnt you will never get unanimous agreement on paint colours so it’s best not to try), purchasing new freestanding furniture instead of new custom-made, built-ins, hanging artwork that can later be moved and using removable decorative bay end panels for visual impact. We also realised that sticking with one colour palette across all branches of the library would mean any furniture we purchased could be moved anywhere as needed and still look good.

The second facelift, at our City East campus, involved a library located in the heritage-listed Brookman Building. In this project the library foyer was refurbished; updating the services desk from a modular, harsh-edged brown block to a curved, inviting bench with a bright contemporary colour scheme. The red colour theme used to highlight the desk has also been used as a recurring highlight colour in several other parts of the library.

The area is now warm and inviting with ottomans, improved internet wireless access, power points for students to use their own laptops, lounge chairs, round tables for group work and includes a new display area for new books and journal issues.

Tips for a facelift project

• Keep clients informed about what’s happening and the benefits by using posters and TV screens that include images of proposed new areas

• Plan for the future and ask what will be needed in three, five and ten years time?

• Remove signage that has built up over the years and keep only the minimum

• Include frontline staff in the process as they see firsthand how the library spaces are used

• Don’t limit yourself for ideas by only visiting other libraries and checking out the use of the physical space - look at retail outlets, trade magazines for use of colour and materials and reception areas such as at health centres

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**In Brief**

**From collection to client focus at Ryde**

Ryde Library in NSW bridges a collection-based past to a technology and people-focussed future through clever design, challenging established systems and a fresh new perspective of what libraries mean for the community.

Unusually for many libraries, this project was a true ‘blank canvas’ and included moving into a space twice the size of the previous library. It was the architect’s first library project and harnessed vivid colour for important focal points throughout the space. Integral to the design was planning for future flexibility, including extensive cabling for flexible power options and mobile help desks.

The collections have been transformed to ensure relevance and accessibility for current reading interests. Arrangement is by popular subjects and genres providing a more browsable collection in both fiction and non-fiction. The non-fiction collection has been organised into seven distinct ‘subject rooms’. It made sense to bring together related subject areas like pregnancy and parenting that are traditionally separated by trains, aeroplanes, gardening and cooking.

The reorganisation of Dewey into subject rooms was a large project but collection statistics and borrower feedback prove that it was a worthwhile exercise.

On Sunday you might find your neighbour providing ambient background music on the public access piano. On a weekday you may spot a group of seniors over by the windows trying their hand at Nintendo Wii.

Working groups proved to be a good way to share the load and get things done. Library staff had a hands-on role in the planning of their new library and worked hard to make sure that the relocation ran smoothly.

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**Students first at Deakin**

The 20,000 volume book wall at Geelong Waurn Ponds library (part of Deakin University) has been described as a celebration of the old book as an object of beauty and interest. It’s just one feature of Deakin’s attempt to refute conceptions of the library as a quiet dusty den, along with a trendy industrialised feel with concrete finishes and exposed fixtures, coupled with a casual lounge feel and what Deakin University Librarian Anne Horn describes as a “fiercely student-centric approach”.

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A modern library is bright and welcoming. You can use your laptop while having a coffee, or talk to friends while reading newspapers. It’s your living room in the city. But it’s also a place for serious study, where you can pore over the books you requested online before you came in, or trawl through shipping lists on microfiche. Catering to this diversity was the aim in renovating the State Library of NSW, which unveiled a new-look State Reference Library on 19 September 2011.

Architect Paulo Macchia from the NSW Government Architect’s Office set out to create “a contemporary, uplifting atmosphere while complementing the existing fabric of the building”. And he was guided by the library’s experts in planning the layout.

As well as interviews with staff and clients, a key step in the planning process was an ‘observational study’. Pairs of staff members – who were clearly identified – watched as people moved about the library. The observers noted whether people entered alone or as part of a group, the mix of resources they used, and who they turned to if they needed help (often security officers).

“As a result of the observational study we reorganised the library into three zones,” said Director of Library Services, Noelle Nelson. “And it definitely seems to be working.”

The first zone, the new Verandah at the front of the library, is now full of people of all ages using personal laptops and library computers, reading daily newspapers, and chatting and working at small tables.

On the first floor, the ‘Ask a Librarian’ service is near the entrance, the popular legal information service is easy to find, and group study areas are near the high school curriculum resources. A casual reading area with a range of newspapers and magazines uses light from the nearby atrium.

The floor below has also been reconfigured to increase natural light and views of the gardens that surround the building. It’s a sanctuary of quiet study space, with the request desk and family history resources on hand, as well as group study rooms. For the convenience of family historians, historical newspapers are now located with the other materials they use.

The library has more lockers, computers and desk space, as well as password-free Wi-Fi access. LCD screens supply the basic facts about using the library, and there are roving assistants to help find information or operate technology. To replace a central copying area, there are printer/copiers at several locations on both floors.

Among the improvements, wheelchair navigation is much easier, and an upgraded adaptive technology area offers independent access and staff support for people with a disability.

It’s an inspiring space as well as a practical one: spectacular images from the library’s collection are reproduced on the walls, including Jane Bennett’s Closing the Gap (1995) and Thomas Woore’s Panorama of Sydney (1829). Adorning the Verandah tables are details from a humorous illustrated map of Sydney, issued to commemorate the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

The new State Reference Library is part of a two-stage renovation that will see the cafe, bookshop and auditorium expanded to create a lively foyer. With the first stage ready in time for the hectic HSC period, the next part of the State Library’s $4.2 million renovation will go ahead in 2012. You can learn more about the State Library of NSW refurbishment at sl.nsw.gov.au.

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BER FUNDS
FLEXIBLE LEARNING

A Federal Government Building the Education Revolution grant largely funded the $3.8 million library Avondale School iCentre in NSW which opened last March. The final result is a flexible and inviting building that supports learning from kindergarten to Year 12.

Consultation was a key element in planning the new building as the school Development Officer, architects, finance committees, the IT Manager and library staff all provided input. This group prioritised flexibility, the integration of ICT, spaces for both individual and collaborative work, and design that would inspire students to visit the building.

Employing local contractors whenever possible not only resulted in reduced costs, but a real sense of community involvement – many of those who worked on the iCentre are parents of past or present students.

We selected FE Technologies RFID to provide security and automate some library functions including loans and stocktaking. The loan system is so simple that kindergarten students can sometimes be seen demonstrating its use to their parents. Wireless network access throughout the building supports the 1:1 student laptop program for secondary students.

Student reactions have been overwhelmingly positive as they use the story centre, complete with underwater mural, the outdoor reading area, relaxed seating areas, group study rooms, the recording centre for creating podcasts and vodcasts, the media room with surround-sound and separate classrooms for information literacy lessons. The copy and print centres provide for student printing and whole-school photocopying facilities and the iCentre is a popular meeting venue.

The open entry area has demonstrated amazing flexibility and so far has been transformed for parent/teacher nights, a book fair, an art show attended by over 1600 visitors and a book launch.

Library staff members at Avondale School see their role as supporting and leading students and staff in their learning needs. We also aim to provide an environment where students feel comfortable, welcome and safe to explore new ideas. The new iCentre provides fantastic opportunities to inspire students to dive into the fun of learning, in a constantly changing information landscape.

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Primary students enjoy teacher-librarian Jenny Lister’s storytelling surrounded by an underwater mural.
Finders keepers

The comings and goings at the end of Carol Bartz’s time at Yahoo! inspired me to refresh my memory about the development of searching facilities for the web. Although the timeline is not particularly clear, there’s a lot of information at www.searchenginehistory.com/. It’s easy to think that the history of internet searching has been all so straightforward; not so. All of the players have had their successes and setbacks (and been involved with other partners from time to time) and it really highlights that in this sort of industry you have to innovate, innovate, innovate. For a while Yahoo! really was a thought and market leader, only to see other more nimble developers spot a niche and muscle in. And some of them prospered, but not all. Talk about continuous improvement!

There when you need them

The first-ever Australian GovCamp was held in Canberra at the beginning of September. GovCamps are like BarCamps - unconferences with an emphasis on participation rather than being lectured to - but these come with a specific direction towards Government activities. This was a typically enthusiastic affair, with a good range of participants from various places around the country and levels within organisations, and plenty of interaction - thanks largely to the efforts of the indefatigable Pia Waugh. One of the highlights was a presentation from Anthony Baxter of the Google Crisis Response team, which has the aim of making critical information more accessible around natural disasters and humanitarian crises - of which there have been way too many recently. And because of the unpredictable nature of such events Anthony and his team are accustomed to getting in touch with government organisations at very short notice - although by now there’s a lot of planning going on to make sure that data in appropriate formats will be available. Apart from his stories about how and when he was approaching the custodians of important information, I was interested to see that his organisation Google.org was almost unknown among the GovCamp attendees. They definitely do a good job, without seeking too much credit.

Oh for some evidence-based decision-making!

We have a new online directory at work, and of course it’s going to take some of us a little time to get used to the new look. What was more disturbing was that Someone In Authority likes fly-out menus - and overrode the advice of the professional designers that it wasn’t a good idea at all. The result? Well, as your cursor approaches the vicinity of the menu it flies out, and if the link you were trying to click lies under the menu - that’s just your bad luck. We can all dream of a time when management comes to value the advice given by the professionals, but I suppose that’ll be some time coming.

Well and truly in the public domain now

I suppose we need to be aware that people we deal with - especially in such a huge community as the internet - are going to pass on, but every time it happens it still comes as a shock. Much as it does in face-to-face relations (I almost said “real life” - ha!), I suppose. On the Stumpers list a week ago it was announced that Michael S Hart had died (tinyurl.com/3ohfuzw) and I’m sure that I wasn’t the only one who thought “but he only posted here last week”. I didn’t know him well but we had crossed swords a little when discussing how far Project Gutenberg should be going in presuming to know what was in the public domain.

This was illustrated very well recently when a friend of mine told the story about her father’s books. He was a first-rank science fiction author from the 1950s until his death in 2001, and gained plenty of fame but not a lot of wealth during his career. Now, his widow has to spend a lot of time pursuing those who happily take his work and assume that they can put it online. I think it would be better if they took the default position that you should respect the wishes of the author and their estate wherever it’s even remotely applicable. Many of the Clan Gutenberg don’t agree.

Whatever your opinion though, you must acknowledge that Michael Hart was one of our pioneers, and more than most of us has left a considerable legacy. Happy trails, Michael.

Where we’ve come from

An interesting interactive chart has been released showing the development of the various browsers (evolutionofweb.appspot.com/) that have defined how we use the web. The surprise for me was that the Opera product has been around so long - beginning a few months before Internet Explorer in 1995. The chart also shows at what stage the various versions of HTML, CSS and so on came into being. It’s not a bad effort at all, although I do think that the multitude of swirly lines just detract a little from the message they’re trying to send.
ABC OPENING UP REGIONAL LIBRARIES

For the past twelve months, a new kind of digital creative has been lurking in the aisles of their local regional library. They’re ABC Open producers, and if you haven’t met one yet, there’s a strong chance that if you’re a regional librarian, you’ll be hearing from one soon.

ABC Open is a new initiative to bring digital media skills to regional communities and help those communities share their stories through the national broadcaster. By the end of this year, 45 highly skilled multimedia producers will be working across regional Australia to provide face-to-face and online skills training and support in digital storytelling, social media and more.

Our focus is on storytelling, and on sharing community knowledge and ideas through digital media. Our producers run workshops and offer online support to contributors. They work wherever there’s room for people to come together and learn, so it’s no surprise that they’re increasingly popping up in libraries.

Libraries and the ABC have a lot in common. We’re both highly trusted institutions, with rich traditions of sharing information and ideas and being accessible and relevant to our communities. As new technology has emerged, we’ve both been challenged to innovate and reinvent ourselves, so that we continue to occupy a central place in our communities.

For the ABC, this means embracing the ‘active’ audience - those people who are no longer satisfied by just consuming media, but who want to be part of creating the stories and media experiences that they want to see and hear. Web 2.0 has given them the tools, but not necessarily the skills or the context to get started.

Since the ABC Open website launched in September 2010, we’ve published around 5,000 contributions, including videos, blogs, and images, and shown a range of those contributions across other ABC websites and platforms, including News 24 which now hosts a regular ABC Open slot. Local stories produced by community members now feature on ABC Local websites, and across other ABC platforms, like the Environment, Arts and Science sites. Local history and characters, regional arts, the changing nature of regional communities, local knowledge and tips and tricks for making stories are all part of the mix.

One of our earliest projects, Now and Then, encouraged the use of personal and public archives to tell a story of how times and places have changed. Contributors held a photo in the exact location where it was photographed, opening a window on past events and people. In many cases, historical societies and council libraries provided the historical images which were then used by camera clubs, schools and other contributors. It was a great cross-generational project which received more than 1,000 images and created a rich collection of stories.

In our first year, we’ve seen many regional libraries recognise the value of working together. In Bendigo, ABC Open producer Jane Curtis has been collaborating with librarians to run workshops, set up a stall to answer questions about digital media and the internet, and establish an account for the library on the photo sharing site, Flickr. She cross-posts on the library’s Facebook page to drive further engagement from Open workshop participants. ABC Open and the Bendigo Library recently collaborated on an exhibition, hosted at the library, of locally created photographic portraits, made at an ABC Open workshop. Jane and the librarians curated the exhibition, conducted school tours and developed study guides and highlighted the library’s collection of photographic books to encourage further engagement. One of the visitors to the library, John Baensch from Heathcote, came to see a portrait of his mother, Daisy. “I’d never been to the library, but what an eye opener, I’ll tell you what,” he said.

ABC Open producers have found that they can draw not only traditional but non-traditional library users into their workshops, which are promoted on ABC Local Radio, online and through flyers and posters around town. Producers work closely with many community organisations, linking those groups more closely with their local libraries through workshops and events.

And as the Illawarra’s ABC Open producer recently told the RISG conference in Sydney, there are many opportunities to collaborate. "Regional communities love the local library, and they love local ABC", he later blogged. "Imagine the power of the two.”

Cath Dwyer
ABC Open Project Co-Director
dwyer.cath@abc.net.au

“Regional communities love the local library and they love local ABC. Imagine the power of the two.”
HELP FOR THE HOMELESS - AND THE AGENCIES THAT HELP THEM

Newcastle Region Library's Angie Weston and Kieran O'Donoghue were on hand at the Hunter Homeless Connect Day hosted by Newcastle and Hunter Homelessness Interagency Network (NNHIN) in August with the aim of emphasising the welcoming nature of public libraries and raising awareness of the free services available at public libraries.

Homeless Connect organisations operate Australia-wide and aim to coordinate a community response to homelessness. The homeless spectrum includes individuals and families unable to find rental accommodation, people sleeping rough, using refuges, or staying with a series of relatives and friends, known as 'couch hopping'.

At the event we distributed storytime brochures, Find Legal Answers showbags, maps highlighting branch locations, bookmarks, and free copies of Good Reading magazine. A display of books relating to home economics and cooking on a budget was popular. We also collected names of people interested in internet and computer lessons. While many of the participants were already library members, others were surprised by how many services and resources public libraries offer.

The day also provided an opportunity to network with other agencies. We raised awareness of the role of public libraries as a hub for homeless people and as an excellent point for information distribution. We also emphasised our ability to tailor programs to meet specific needs, such as for an adult education instructor who teaches a group of at-risk people aged between 16 and 24 and wants to gradually introduce them to the library and broader social opportunities.

It was reassuring to hear libraries praised highly by other agency staff, while others, who had not been aware of our services or of our relevance to homeless people, gained a new insight into what public libraries can do for the community.

A specific aim of NNHIN is to highlight barriers and create opportunities to facilitate appropriate responses and services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. With this in mind, Newcastle Region Library recently modified its membership requirements to ensure homeless and at-risk people are not excluded from borrowing items or accessing computers and the internet.

All the library staff also supported this event with donations of non-perishable items and personal care products to distribute on the day.

While the day was a tremendous success we identified many ways we could improve upon our contribution to next year’s Hunter Homeless Connect Day. We’d love to hear from other library professionals who have conducted outreach activities with homeless and at risk people.

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Angie Weston
Research Librarian, Newcastle Region Library
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Those not immersed in the world of cataloguing may not have heard of FRBR (Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records) but you will. FRBR is an integral part of the Resource Description and Access-based cataloguing standard that is set to replace AACR2. And those not immersed in the world of yarn and fibre may not have heard of Ravelry - an extensive database and integrated social network for knitters, crocheters and spinners, but this popular network is actually a brilliant example of cataloguing/describing, user contribution, and intelligent system design working together to create a useful, educational, and most importantly well-used (1,489,124 users to date) resource in the FRBR mould. Nyssa Parkes explains what cataloguers can learn from knitters.

Started as a small personal endeavour by a knitter and her programmer partner, Ravelry (www.ravelry.com) became so popular in such a short time (the first weekend saw 15,000 yarn enthusiasts sign up) that when the call went out to improve access to the database of patterns, users rushed to help improve the initially underpowered and under-resourced system. Some of them were librarians, who responded quickly with comments such as, “I’m a librarian and I want to help you clean up this database. I cannot look at this any more”.

The inventive notion of inviting network members to join the ‘search party’ in July 2010 and appealing to the online community to help improve the metadata describing patterns helped Ravelry create a faceted advanced search function. A small range of yarn prizes were offered to encourage participation. In one week 23,500 users categorised and assigned attributes to nearly 160,000 patterns (with admin moderation for consistency) resulting in a million classifications/checks being made to the patterns database.

The database has now become a one-stop-shop for finding accurate information and support. The advanced search, with an extensive (and nested) array of facets, now allows narrowing by details such as language, format, needle size, fibre type, and yardage required, and also draws from the massive pool of user-subjective data to create qualitative facets based on averages such as difficulty, quality rating, and popularity.

Ravelry allows users to post photos and metadata about their own projects and link them to the database. Forums and a commenting system allow each user to discuss work and even ask questions directly from pattern designers.

User contribution has now become a familiar feature of many online collections, but it is rare to see such an enthusiastic response. Clearly Ravelry is working with the luxury of an already-established community of users who were previously interacting and describing their work using personal systems, but bringing the community together online required the combination of many elements: social space, a user-friendly interface and reliable metadata.

Along the way, this group have not only provided access and information about single items in a database, but also described and somewhat broken down the less-hierarchical relationships between publications, authors, consumers, materials and conversations.

Nyssa Parkes
Online Projects Librarian, Swinburne University of Technology
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*For an update on progress with RDA testing, see INCITE October 2011.
IFLA 2011 Congress Report

Courtesy of the an ALIA Excellence Award, Hayley Morton attended the IFLA Congress in Puerto Rico in August, donning her first-timer’s green ribbon to navigate her way through a choice of 219 sessions, 22 library tours and more.

The opening keynote speaker, Dr Fernando Pico, set the theme for much of the conference for me as he spoke about the history of censorship and the journey of forbidden books through time and across cultures. Dr Pico reminded us that librarians need not, and should not, be complicit in matters of restriction to access of the written word. It is our calling to be advocates of free and open access to information.

IFLA Committee on Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression (FAIFE) Chair, Paul Sturges discussed recent reports from Reportier Sans Frontiers (en.rsf.org/) which indicate internet censorship by many governments is on the rise. (FAIFE’s book of choice on freedom of access to information in the digital age is The Net Delusion: The Dark Side of Internet Freedom by Yevgeni Morozov.)

Whether the new eBook economy can guarantee freedom of access was discussed by a panel of authors, e-content developers and publishers. Ebooks are creating licensing and privacy issues for both publishers and libraries. One publisher’s announcement of their intention to limit eBook lending in libraries to a licence of 26 issues per book and another publisher’s demand for patron information to ensure loans were only made inside the library’s service area are indicative of the minefield of unanswered questions the industry and our profession are facing.

Copyright in the digital age was also a topic of note. How do creators get their deserved rewards under the new models whilst ensuring access to the community at large? Will publishers develop new models to circumvent libraries altogether? Alternatively, will publishers disappear as mediators between authors and purchasers as user-friendly creation tools make it much more feasible for authors to do it alone or will libraries collaborate directly with authors to publish?

Could libraries collaborate with authors to publish e-formats? The panel consensus was that traditional publishers will still remain useful intermediaries between creators and buyers, by enabling platforms which can supply cheaper, better and faster than individual creators, but they must find new and better models for doing so. Libraries need to be more aggressive in negotiating deals which safeguard public access. And library professionals urgently need to gain a better understanding of the issues currently faced by publishers, in order to be able to create meaningful dialogue and negotiations.

There were many good projects presented at IFLA 2011, which I do not have space to discuss here. But I must say that I was very proud to note that the work we do in Australia is as good, and in some cases better, than our international peers. In fact OCLC CEO, Jay Jordan, in his address on cloud computing in libraries and discovery layers, singled out our very own TROVE as a shining example. There were a few Australian presenters at IFLA this year but I believe there are many more projects and services underway across public, academic, special and school libraries which deserve to be showcased to the world. So get cracking on your IFLA 2012 abstracts now!

Hayley Morton
Library Services Coordinator, SA Water
hayley.morton@sawater.com.au

“IT IS OUR CALLING TO BE ADVOCATES FOR FREE AND OPEN ACCESS TO INFORMATION.”

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NEW CROSS-ORGANISATION VISTA FOR NEW GRADS

Academic libraries have experienced rapid transformation in the last twenty years. The availability of digital technology has provided leaders with the opportunity to overcome the access limitations of traditional libraries — and is opening up a new vista for information professionals.

Historically, academic libraries’ central good has been the large, local book and periodical collections bought from suppliers to fulfil the teaching, learning, and research needs of a library’s users. The collections’ learning, research, and teaching value was held as the primary indicator of the quality of a library. However, new forms of access have now emerged that have resulted in the dominance of these collections being reduced. Academic libraries have shifted their focus to specialist services as a way to remain relevant.

The services that academic libraries now provide are no longer universal from library to library. Services may include digital content management, research support, copyright advice, research data management, or in-house publishing, but whether a library supports one or all of these services will depend on each library’s institutional infrastructure and setting. However, services supporting digital content management have emerged as a necessity in the service era.

In universities, the digitisation of scholarly and administrative functions in academic and professional departments has produced a deluge of digital content. This has created an opportunity for academic libraries to participate in the management of universities’ research outputs and digital assets. Academic libraries now manage one or more of research outputs, research data, theses and dissertations, administrative records, university publications, multimedia collections, learning objects, and course materials. In physical form, the environment for managing such information had been scattered throughout faculty departments and administrative units, without common management policies and guidelines. With the addition of centralised organisation, management, discovery, and delivery of digital content created at universities, libraries can provide a value-added input to an already trusted body of information.

Digital content management represents a challenging, technology-dependent, and evolving area in the library sector. Universities in Australia, the United Kingdom, and North America now commonly advertise positions for digital archivists, digital collections librarians, and digital preservation specialists. The range of job titles is as wide as the required skills. In many cases, the job descriptions combine a number of existing professions, including archivist, records manager, copyright expert, policy maker, and IT specialist. While digital content management is a new area in academic libraries, many of the skills and functions performed have an analogy to traditional librarian functions, including acquisitions, management, discovery, delivery, patron accounts, metadata creation, storage, and security.

Institutional repositories are the most established digital content management service in academic libraries, with every university in Australia now operating at least one repository. Institutional repositories collect, organise, and provide access to an online collection of a university’s research outputs. Government assessment reporting requirements, new research frameworks, and institutional awareness of the importance and complexity of managing digital content have supported the growth of institutional repositories. Project funding for these digital content management systems aimed to create a network of repository systems capable of collecting research outputs created at universities. Their success has been dependent on strategic service design that is value adding, while still being sustainable beyond short-term project funding bursts.

Responsible digital content management will see academic libraries fostering programmatic development, rather than project development, which more often places the system ahead of the more important service.

As innovation in technology expands, user demands increase, and e-scholarship becomes the norm, academic libraries will have to create services not traditionally considered part of their domain. This requires people that span library and university departments to collaborate to combine technological capacity and administrative oversight, as input from a range of university departments with knowledge and expertise beyond librarianship is called for. Academic library services will increasingly become deeply embedded within their institutions and cross-department collaboration will continue to develop alongside targeted library services that aim to achieve wider outcomes for universities. This represents an important marker of growth for academic libraries.

Academic libraries are now increasingly dynamic and complex units in universities. The responsibilities of libraries are expanding and new expertise is being called for. These changes require new graduates of library courses to have broad outlooks and flexible attitudes towards work. The field of digital content management provides an exciting opportunity for willing new graduates to be involved in an evolving field where they will receive a range of unique yet transferable skills related to - but not always available on entry into - traditional library roles. By entering the field at such a beguiling juncture, new librarians will cement themselves as information professionals in a rapidly evolving information society.

“By entering the field at such a beguiling juncture, new librarians will cement themselves as information professionals.”

Steven Richardson

Steven Richardson completed a Graduate Diploma in Information Management at RMIT University in 2010. He currently works in the Information Resources department at Swinburne University of Technology, as the Assistant Content Management Librarian.
2012 Election of ALIA Vice-president and three Directors

Call for nominations

Nominations are called for ALIA Vice-President (President-elect) and three positions on the Board of Directors of ALIA as incorporated under Corporations Law.

The Vice-President (President-elect) and three positions on the Board of Directors will be elected by the membership at large.

Nominees must be personal members of the Association and will represent the interests of the organisation as a whole rather than those of a particular constituency.

The Vice-President and directors will assume office at the Board meeting following the Annual General Meeting in May 2012.

The Vice-President (President-elect) will assume the Presidency following the Annual General Meeting of the Association in 2013 until the 2014 Annual General Meeting.

The term of office of Directors will be until the Annual General Meeting in 2014.

Nominations must be in writing and must be signed by two financial members of the Association and include the consent in writing of the nominee. Nomination forms must be accompanied by a current curriculum vitae which provides full details of academic and professional qualifications and a 100-word statement of professional concerns. The curriculum vitae should be arranged under headings of present position, previous positions, and professional activities. A standard colour portrait photograph must be included.

Nomination forms are available from ALIA National Office or via the ALIA website.

Nominations close at 5:00 pm AEDT on Wednesday 21 December 2011 and should be sent to the ALIA Executive Director, PO. Box 6335, Kingston ACT 2604; email executive.director@alia.org.au, or fax 026282 2249.


ASSOCIATION NEWS

Getting ready for National Year of Reading

Want to stock up for 2012 on National Year of Reading merchandise?

There are two ways to go. At www.cafepress.com.au/NationalYearofReading2012 you’ll find an account for ordering small numbers of merchandise items such as T-shirts, mugs, stickers and cards. The items are produced in America and will be shipped to you. This service has been established as the most viable response to the logistics of small production runs of this merchandise.

If you’re planning for bigger numbers, you can use local Australian suppliers and create your own promotional materials using the National Year of Reading logo. There are no restrictions on the logo’s use for National Year of Reading projects and it’s available to library services and other organisations. You’ll find the National Year of Reading logo free to download at www.love2read.org.au/nyr-stuff.cfm, along with other resources including an email signature, and flyer. Resources, videos and PowerPoint presentation are available on the National Year of Reading wiki at www.love2read2012.wikispaces.com/Resources.

You can also order a National Year of Reading banner from Australia Signs at www.signagecompany@yahoo.com.au or 1800 815166 (your logo can be added to the design).

National Year of Reading and our participating partners are keen to see examples of promotional materials so don’t forget to share your photos and ideas with us at www.love2read.org.au.

Got a question? Contact Robyn Ellard (0412 659 919 or robyn@thelibraryagency.org.au) or Karen Ward-Smith (0408 051 740 or karen@thelibraryagency.org.au).

Don’t forget to register for NYR2012 before November 15 at www.love2read.org.au/registration.cfm.
The Amazing Read promises to be bigger and better than ever. Public libraries from all over Australia will be participating and it will be exciting to see children and families connecting with other avid readers and writers across the nation. The program is free for libraries, children and their families.

The Amazing Read is designed to take participants on a journey both throughout Australia and also into the magical world of books. Children will be encouraged to share their favourite places to read. They will also wonder at the many different places stories can take them – from the deepest depths of the ocean into far outer space.

The Summer Reading Club consists of two elements – a website providing engaging online activities and an interactive website offering exciting activities and parties. Libraries are encouraged to interpret the theme in many different ways, and to use a wide range of activities, including storytelling and performance, songs, creative activities, artwork, cooking and animation to engage young participants. The Summer Reading Club will showcase some of these techniques and inspire children and young people to engage in a multitude of creative pursuits derived from the written word.

The website [www.summerreadingclub.org.au](http://www.summerreadingclub.org.au) will be launched on 1 December 2011 and will be accessible for the duration of the program. The end date of the Summer Reading Club is flexible, however libraries are encouraged to continue the program right up until the commencement of school.

Public library staff can access the wiki at [www.summerreadingclub.org.au/wiki/pmwiki.php?n=Category.2011-12AmazingRead](http://www.summerreadingclub.org.au/wiki/pmwiki.php?n=Category.2011-12AmazingRead) for ideas to help with planning and access to the templates for running a successful program. Check the wiki for further details of how to be involved events and news of participating authors.

For further details about the Summer Reading Club, contact the team at the State Library of Queensland at summerreadingclub@slq.qld.gov.au.

Katie Gibbs
Reading Program Coordinator, State Library of Queensland
summerreadingclub@slq.qld.gov.au

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**NEW MEMBERS**

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**ASSOCIATION NEWS**

**SUMMERTIME, AND THE READING IS EASY**

It’s that time of year again – the Summer Reading Club is back. And already more than 1000 public libraries are registered to take part.

From the top end to the snow fields, from the outback to the beach, children all over Australia are about to take part in The Amazing Read, this year’s Summer Reading Club program.

Already confirmed for this year’s program are three outstanding authors who will be delivering online chats – Andy Griffiths, Morris Gleitzman and Oliver Phommavanh. Other authors who have committed to this year’s Summer Reading Club include Paul Jennings, Rippin, Phil Kettle, Pat Flynn, Kerry Brown, and Deb Abela.

Developed and hosted by the State Library of Queensland in partnership with ALIA Public Libraries Advisory Committee and other State Libraries, The Summer Reading Club is about discovering great authors and illustrators of picture books, junior and young adult fiction and non-fiction. Literary and creative activities, both online and in public libraries, aim to encourage a love of reading and ongoing multi-literacy skills development amongst children, young people and their families.

The Amazing Read promises to be bigger and better than ever. Public libraries from all over Australia will be participating and it will be exciting to see children and families connecting with other avid readers and writers across the nation. The program is free for libraries, children and their families.

The Amazing Read is designed to take participants on a journey both throughout Australia and also into the magical world of books. Children will be encouraged to share their favourite places to read. They will also wonder at the many different places stories can take them – from the deepest depths of the ocean into far outer space.

The Summer Reading Club consists of two elements – a library-based program of fun hands-on activities and an interactive website providing engaging online activities. Ideally, libraries participating in the Summer Reading Club will incorporate both elements of the program.

Designed to be a flexible, fun and practical program that can be adapted to suit individual library’s requirements, the program can be as simple as registering young readers and providing them with activity booklets and incentive prizes, to conducting a full-blown program with regular in-house activities and parties.

Libraries are encouraged to interpret the theme in many different ways, and to use a wide range of activities, including storytelling and performance, songs, creative activities, artwork, cooking and animation to engage young participants. The Summer Reading Club will showcase some of these techniques and inspire children and young people to engage in a multitude of creative pursuits derived from the written word.

The website [www.summerreadingclub.org.au](http://www.summerreadingclub.org.au) will be launched on 1 December 2011 and will be accessible for the duration of the program. The end date of the Summer Reading Club is flexible, however libraries are encouraged to continue the program right up until the commencement of school.

Public library staff can access the wiki at [www.summerreadingclub.org.au/wiki/pmwiki.php?n=Category.2011-12AmazingRead](http://www.summerreadingclub.org.au/wiki/pmwiki.php?n=Category.2011-12AmazingRead) for ideas to help with planning and access to the templates for running a successful program. Check the wiki for further details of how to be involved events and news of participating authors.

For further details about the Summer Reading Club, contact the team at the State Library of Queensland at summerreadingclub@slq.qld.gov.au.

Katie Gibbs
Reading Program Coordinator, State Library of Queensland
summerreadingclub@slq.qld.gov.au
AND THE WINNERS ARE...

In September INCITE we asked you what the most critical issue library and information services face is, in planning for the future. The winners of our competition all received a copy of Steve O’Connor’s Imagining Your Library’s Future: Scenario Planning for Library and Information Services, generously donated by Chandos Books. Here’s what the winners had to say:

The most critical issue library and information services face in planning for their future is.....

“The critical issue library and information services face in planning for the future is users thinking that they can do without us. We are doing such an outstanding job that users do not believe that we are necessary. My general remedy for this ailment is to become professional at marketing.”

-Nina Suprun

“I am concerned and passionate about the future value placed on school libraries and the recognition they will receive for their educational possibilities by those in leadership roles. This issue is the most critical issue library and information services face in planning for the future, in my opinion.”

-Kristy Moody

“An aging workforce, loss of experience, skills and knowledge as a large percentage of those employed in the profession edge closer to retirement. This raises challenges in terms of succession planning, skills transfer and the need to keep attracting younger generations into the profession. The internet cannot replace us, yet.”

-Kim Sherwin

“Persuading funding bodies and non-library users that libraries and information services are not rendered obsolete by the internet and Google but are natural partners that add value to the process of finding information – by finding just the information you needed but didn’t know was there.”

-Catherine Kerrigan

“The most critical issue library/information services face in planning for the future is initial education and ongoing training for librarians, library technicians and other staff. Everything moves much faster now. Technology and the world change often. More resources will be online. Library/information professionals need to be ready for anything.”

-Deborah Martin

“How to make libraries relevant to Australians aged between 15 and 65. Younger children learning to read and retirees with time to read rely on libraries. But there is a 50-year gap during which libraries are irrelevant for most people for information or for recreational reading.”

-John Brudenall

Congratulations to all our winners and thank you to Chandos Books.

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THE ALIA NATIONAL ADVISORY CONGRESS 2011

This year’s National Advisory Congress (NAC) meetings have seen some exciting discussions and debates around the topic The Future of the Profession. We discovered a passion for compulsory PD, how copyright is struggling to keep up with the slew of new electronic media devices, and we addressed the future of ALIA conferences.

To round out these local meetings, ALIA Board Member John Bayliss will host a regional and rural teleconference on 7 November to ensure our valuable members not located in major metropolitan hubs could have their voice heard.

Wrapping up these engaging discussions the ALIA Board President Margaret Allen will convene a final NAC with a representative from each of the local and teleconference meetings on the 16th November.

Members are encouraged to visit the website and read the available resources and check back soon for the final report.

For more information, please visit www.alia.org.au/governance/nac2011/ or phone 02 6215 8222 or 1800 020 071.
CONTRIBUTORS IN THIS ISSUE

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PD scheme audit time is here - be prepared!
The annual random selection of 10% of PD scheme members for audit has commenced.

Want to know how it works? Go to www.alia.org.au/education/pd/scheme/audit.html

Participation in ALIA’s professional development (PD) scheme is open to personal professional Associate members and Library Technician members. For more information go to www.alia.org.au/education/pd.

EVENTS

NATIONAL
28 November – 2 December
Buildings, Books and Blackboards: Intersecting Narratives
Combined conference of Australian and New Zealand History of Education Society, Mechanics Worldwide and Library History Forum
Information: buildingsbooksandblackboards.blogspot.com
20-23 November
SWITCH 2011
Contact: Vicki Smith vicki.smith@manly.nsw.gov.au

ACT
23 November
Value of Libraries workshop and Christmas Function
AGLIN / ALIA Active event
Contact: Karna ODea, karna.odea@ato.gov.au

NSW
28 November – 2 December
ALIA Training- TAFE NSW- Customise Information for your Clients
Contact: Kirrin Sampson training@alia.org.au

VIC
11 November
ALIA Training – EndNote Training
Contact: Kirrin Sampson training@alia.org.au
2 December
Victorian ALIA Library Technicians End of Year Christmas Function
Contact: Kim Wilson kwilson@slv.vic.gov.au

This is just a taste of the ALIA events on offer. For a comprehensive and up to date list, check the website at www.alia.org.au/events.

Want to list your event on the ALIA website? Group members and office bearers – don’t forget to upload your event at www.alia.org.au/events/add.

Not an ALIA event? Your LIS event may also be eligible to be added to our non-ALIA events. Contact: events@alia.org.au for more information.

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FRIEENDS STEP IN AFTER THE FLOODS

The January 2011 Queensland floods brought with them widespread physical, social and economic damage across the state. While it has not been the only environmental disaster to occur in Queensland, it was shocking in its reach, causing devastation and hardship to thousands of people and businesses. BoysTown, the charity for which Amanda Gardner works, is one of those businesses and they lost their entire library.

BoysTown was established in 1961 by the De La Salle Brothers as a boys residential school in Queensland. What began as a facility for young 'wayward boys' has grown to be one of the largest not-for-profit organisations which specifically seeks to address the needs of young people in Australia. Services include training, education and employment programs, advocacy and research, emergency accommodation support, Parentline and parenting programs. Kids Helpline, a national 24/7 telephone and online counselling advice and support service is just one important program provided by BoysTown.

While government funding provides significant support, BoysTown is principally funded through its own endeavours by donor campaigns, corporate giving and BoysTown lotteries. The lotteries are a core fundraising activity for the organisation and are integral to its financial viability.

We were fortunate that both the lotteries and Kids Helpline were only minimally affected by the flood damage. It meant that, after the floods, these activities could more easily resume and BoysTown could look to the future.

The damage to the offices in Milton, however, was extensive and included the corporate library. Along with the entire ground floor, my small, one person library, was completely wiped out.

The library collection was a varied one, containing over 3000 items focussing on a range of subject areas in the social services. Every item in the library was lost and in the clean-up no items were recovered.

Having taken over the position of one person librarian four weeks previously, disaster preparedness was not on my radar. I was still trying to remember people’s names, let alone promote a disaster management strategy.

So, here was I, new to the organisation, without a library, faced with the loss of the entire collection, no possibility of recovering resources, little knowledge of the corporate culture and wondering if I still had a job. I needn’t have been concerned. While the mud was still being swept out of the building I was assured my job was secure and the library would be rebuilt.

This space is too short to go into the process of rebuilding a library after a disaster and all the lessons learnt from that process. I would like to give an example, however, of the benefits of ALIA membership when such a disaster occurs. The first task after the floods was to complete a library valuation. Unfortunately, it was not possible to use a standard formula for valuing collections and I was required to price match each title as best as I could.

This process was very complex and became especially complicated by my inexperience with the collection, catalogue software, dirty data from the old catalogue and the eclectic nature of the collection itself.

To make a long story short, in one post-disaster ALIA meeting, a very simple piece of advice was offered: determine what assistance was needed and ask for help with a specific task. So, when I asked, Global Books in Print, a Victorian based organisation, provided a free price-matching service. They were able to match about half of the collection in the space of a few days.

It was my colleagues in the ALIA SIG, Queensland OPALS (QOPALs), who helped with the remainder of the price matching. QOPALs provide a network between ALIA members in Queensland who are the sole librarians in their work units. The network is a forum for support and knowledge creation, sharing and information dissemination.

My colleagues in QOPALs lost no time in offering help and as a result pricing, publisher and supplier data on approximately 1500 titles were matched and entered into a spreadsheet and sent back to me within three weeks.

The price matching was a messy and time consuming job and from a simple piece of advice gleaned at an ALIA meeting my QOPAL colleagues provided relevant and valuable assistance when it was needed.

I have learnt many lessons over the last few months, one of those being the real value of belonging to a professional association such as ALIA. ALIA provided the networking which enabled me to draw on the generous support my fellow librarians in a time of crisis. Ten months on, I was pleased to be able to host a QOPALs meeting in my new library which, I have to say, is a great place to be.
Need to fill a vacancy?

Support the library industry and snatch up a professional using ALIA employment.

www.alia.org.au/employment