



32nd Annual General Meeting

6.01pm AEST Monday 4 May 2020

ALIA House 9-11 Napier Close Deakin, ACT 2600 and via webinar.

MINUTES

1. Notice of convening meeting

The meeting opened at 6.01pm on Monday 4 May 2020. In accordance with the Association's constitution, the President, Robert Knight, gave notice of convening the meeting. He acknowledged the traditional owners of the land and welcomed everyone, including ALIA Fellows, past Presidents and Board members. Robert Knight introduced the Vice President/President-elect Viv Barton, Chief Executive Officer, Sue McKerracher and Ian McCallum, Parliamentarian for the Annual General Meeting. It was noted that due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions on public meetings, the AGM was being held as a predominantly online meeting for the first time.

72 Member were present, including 9 proxies, which constituted a quorum. The President called the meeting to order.

Voting rights for Members voting in person were established. Proxies were received from 9 Members. The voting procedures were outlined by the Parliamentarian noting that the GoToWebinar meeting software would be used to conduct a poll for two items to be confirmed by Members. In addition, the hand raising functionality enabling Members to second the motions and the chat functionality to ensure Members could ask questions during the meeting were outlined.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from: Linda Notley and Andrew Faraker.

3. Minutes of the 2019 AGM

The draft minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting were available to members attending via webinar and had also been posted to the ALIA website.



Motion: That the minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting be confirmed as a true and correct record of the meeting.

Moved: Robert Knight

Second Aileen Weir

Motion Carried by a majority of Members attending by webinar and those who had provided proxy forms.

4. Reports

a. President's Report

The President presented the following report:

The past two years spent on the ALIA Board have offered me one of the most rewarding representative experiences of my career.

ALIA is a truly inspiring organisation which places the needs of its Members at front and centre of everything that it does. This strong membership focus, is demonstrated through the multitude of information, services, campaigns and responses generated by ALIA staff; and the deployment of State Managers to support ALIA members at the local level; and the network of Advisory Committees to extend the reach of member representation as far as possible. My sincere thanks all those people involved in these important committees.

I have been particularly inspired by the scope and influence of the organisation, achieved through the development of strategic partnerships, identifying where and how the Australian library sector can contribute in traditional and nontraditional ways, and reimagining how libraries can optimise contributions to the communities of interest that they serve.

During my presidential year, I have been proud to represent ALIA and to participate in some amazing events. On my very first day as President, I was joined by Vice President Viv Barton at Government House, Canberra, to see the Governor General, His Excellency the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove and Her Excellency Lady Cosgrove read the 2019 National Simultaneous Storytime book *Alpacas With Maracas* to a group of school children who were almost as excited as Viv and I were. Since then, I have represented the Association at numerous events, including the following highlights:

- Presentation of the 2019 ALIA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Scholarship to Charles Sturt University (CSU) Library and Information Science student Murray McBride, as well as presenting ALIA Student Awards at the Charles Sturt University 2019 graduation.
- The Australian Book Industry Awards, a gala evening for authors, publishers, book sellers, libraries and book lovers in general.
- The IFLA Conference in Athens where some 3,600 library people from across the world joined together to share knowledge, experiences and stories.



- The Parliamentary Friends of Australian Books and Writers event at Parliament House, Canberra.
- Undertaking MC duties at an inspiring joint ALIA, Australian Public Library Alliance and National and State Libraries Australia function at Parliament House to celebrate the International Year of Indigenous Languages and the Year of the Public Domain.

The selected presidential theme for my term, leadership, has received a positive response. The primary objective of the theme has been to highlight the vital role of strong leadership at every level in order to secure a sustainable future for the library and information sector. The release of the *ALIA Workforce Diversity Trend Report 2019* was followed up by the *NextGen Leadership Scorecard*, highlighting the library sector needs to invest our energies going forward. The 2020 Leadership and Innovation Forum series, postponed until later in 2020, will connect ALIA Members with leaders and influencers in the library and GLAMR sector to further build the picture of what inspiring future leadership looks like for our sector.

Working with the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 ALIA Boards has been a marvellous collegial experience and I am extremely grateful to have worked with and learnt from such an inspiring group of colleagues. I would encourage ALIA Members to consider nominating for a position on future ALIA Boards.

The Board has tackled some complex issues during the past 12 months and made some tough decisions. Perhaps the most challenging of all matters to come before the Board was a discussion about the future of ALIA's major financial asset – the building that it currently occupies. In the context of ensuring the future financial sustainability of the Association, the ALIA Board sought advice from an Advisory Committee comprising ALIA members with a long-standing interest in the Canberra property, during 2019. The committee received presentations and detailed reports from property and town planning experts and commissioned independent financial modelling. On the advice of the committee and with supporting evidence from the experts, the ALIA Board agreed to progress the sale of 9-11 Napier Close, Deakin in 2020.

The sale will enable ALIA to create a substantial, flexible asset base, with several million dollars held in a balanced investment vehicle. It will enable the future leaders of the Association to choose how and where to employ staff; and free ALIA from the burden of property management, the ups and downs of the Canberra real estate market and the cost of building maintenance.

I would like to acknowledge the exceptional efforts, capacity and commitment of the ALIA staff. Lead by the indomitable Sue McKerracher, ALIA CEO, this relatively small and geographically distributed team works very hard and extremely effectively to meet the needs of Members and to represent the Association in so many diverse ways. Their innovative and dynamic ideas and responses to sector issues places ALIA at the forefront of so many discussions and forums. On behalf of the Board and all ALIA Members – thank you one and all.

ALIA has effectively responded to two unexpected events during 2020. The bushfires that ravaged many areas of Australia during our last summer wrought considerable devastation in numerous communities. At the time, ALIA released a response to the bushfire crisis



acknowledging the way library staff step up to help their communities when natural disasters strike, and offering support to any libraries directly impacted by fire. Library staff who feared that their library may be at risk had immediate access to disaster preparation and planning information on the ALIA website.

When the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic struck Australia in March this year, ALIA once again answered the call. This unprecedented event has had broad ranging impacts on people and communities across Australia and indeed the world. ALIA has provided its members and the Australian library sector with a sprightly, innovative and relevant response to support libraries to continue service provision in the virtual world. Libraries without people – who ever thought that would be a thing, but here we are, sharing ideas, helping communities and making the most of a situation that none of us ever envisaged. Thank you, ALIA, for supporting libraries through this extremely challenging period that in all likelihood will continue for some time to come.

The ALIA Board of Directors will play a critical role in setting the direction for a sustainable and resilient future for the Association as we continue to work through this crisis.

In closing, I would like to thank all Members of ALIA for their patronage of this amazing Association. I urge you all to continue your membership, utilise the exceptional professional development opportunities offered by ALIA, and become active Members of the Association. The more you participate, the more you will benefit and the more you will gain. The other thing that you can do is phone a friend (or colleague) who isn't a member of ALIA and encourage them to join. The strength of ALIA lies with its membership. Why wouldn't you? 5,000 members can't be wrong!

b. Chief Executive Officer's Report

The Chief Executive Officer presented the following report:

We started the year well with an excellent result from the ALIA Information Online conference in February, which not only received positive feedback from delegates, but also returned a substantial and necessary surplus to the Association. Following three years of deficits, a successful conference together with a fully tenanted property helped put us back into the black. The financial result was also aided by our membership figures remaining steady – a real achievement at a time when professional bodies in many industries are finding member retention to be a major challenge.

The losses sustained over the previous few years directly related to ALIA House office spaces being vacant. With all spaces let at the start of 2019, the immediate pressure lifted, but the ALIA Board took the opportunity to review ongoing ownership of the property, which has served the Association well, but is now looking its age when compared with new office developments in Deakin.

The original reasons for ALIA building in Canberra included taking advantage of concessional leases for national organisations, developing an additional revenue stream to supplement membership income, and advocating to nearby federal government. All these objectives have been achieved and remaining in Canberra has been advantageous.



We consulted with our Members to produce the library agenda and promote the Vote Library campaign for the 18 May federal election. We worked with other book industry bodies to promote inclusive publishing and secured an election promise of \$2 million for the Australian Inclusive Publishing Initiative from Labor.

Throughout the year, we engaged in 35 meetings with MPs, Senators, Ministers, their advisers, and senior executives in the Arts, Education, Employment Foreign Affairs and Trade, Health, Prime Minister & Cabinet and Social Services. It was also a busy time for submissions, with ALIA responding in detail to 19 government inquiries and agency reviews.

We had been talking to the Department of Health for some time about the role of public libraries in providing consumer health information and out of this ALIA negotiated a significant project for 2019-2020, which enabled us to distribute more than \$800,000 in grants to public libraries in every state and territory and to health libraries.

Other highlights of the year were the ALIA Library Design Awards, held at the State Library of Queensland in March to coincide with the Asia Pacific Architecture Forum and the IFLA Library Buildings and Equipment Standing Committee mid-term meeting; ALIA National Simultaneous Storytime, in May, which beat all previous records with more than 1.1 million participants at over 11,500 locations, in Australasia, Asia, North America and Europe, and the Sustainable Development Goals Summit held at ALIA House in September, bringing together library leaders to set stretch targets for libraries against the 2030 Agenda.

Course closures provided a challenging backdrop for our Learning team during 2019, but also provided the impetus to have some necessary, difficult conversations with Members about how we will define a library and information professional in years to come. It had been obvious for some time that one-off qualifications alone were not enough to sustain a lifelong career in such a fast-moving industry, and that ongoing learning would be essential for maintaining professional status. This set the scene for further visioning and development work in 2020.

Given the extent of our activities, people outside the Association often think we are funded by government, but every dollar we spend has been contributed by Members through annual subscriptions, or comes to us as revenue from conferences, exhibitions, training, advertising and office rent. As a result, our staff need to be flexible, hard-working and willing to take on new tasks as they arise.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our staff, the ALIA Board, Advisory Committees, Groups and other vital volunteers for making the activities described in our annual report possible.

Although our AGM is usually exclusively focused on the previous year's successes, at this time we can't avoid mentioning the massive disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the Association. From a position of strength at the beginning of the year, we now find ourselves facing significant challenges. Libraries have closed. Staff have been stood down. Services have moved online. The ALIA National Conference has been cancelled.



All this makes our mantra of 'together we are stronger' even more important. The Association is far better placed than others in the GLAM sector to survive the inevitable downturn, but we can only do so with the continuing support of our Members.

5. Presentation of the 2019 annual report and financial statements

The 2019 Annual Report and the annual financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2019 together with the Directors' report and auditor's report in respect of those financial statements were tabled.

The President congratulated the ALIA team responsible for the production of a high quality and informative annual report.

He also acknowledged the work of the ALIA CEO and Director of Corporate Services for their high level of financial oversight, risk management, and reporting to the Board, which places ALIA in a strong financial position despite lost revenue from the cancellation of the ALIA National Conference 2020 and other COVID-19 related costs and revenue impacts.

There were no questions from Members relating to the Annual Report or the financial statements.

The chair noted that the 2019 Annual Report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2019 together with the Directors' report and auditor's report in respect of those financial statements were duly tabled.

6. Confirmation of newly elected Directors and Vice-President

The meeting considered the confirmation of the election of Directors to the ALIA Board.

Motion: That the meeting notes that Clare Thorpe was declared elected as the Institutional Director and Stefanie Gaspari, Justine Hyde and Emily Wilson were declared elected as Directors of the Association for the term commencing from the conclusion of the 2020 Annual General meeting.

Moved: Robert Knight

Second: Paula Kelly Paull

Motion Carried by a majority of Members attending by webinar and those who had provided proxy forms.



Members were advised that the incoming Directors had been presented with gold ALIA pins that are traditionally given to incoming Directors.

It was noted that a new Board structure was being phased-in, in accordance with amendments to the ALIA Constitution passed at the 2019 AGM. Part of the restructure means that the Vice-President will be appointed by the Board from one of the Directors other than the President.

Members were advised that the 2020/21 Board of Directors had appointed Vicki Edmunds as the next Vice-President for a period of one year following the conclusion of the AGM

7. Notices of motion

The President advised the meeting that there were no motions or special resolutions to put to the meeting.

8. General business

a. Message sticks

The work of the ALIA Board, particularly under the stewardship of past President Lyndall Ley to raise the Association's awareness and engagement with Indigenous matters was noted. For 2020, Indigenous artist Wayne 'Buddy' Martin was commissioned to create a message stick which could be passed from one President to the next to symbolise the passing on of knowledge, experience and goodwill from the current Board to the future Board.

From this brief, Buddy created two clapping sticks; a traditional instrument used during ceremonies. Due to the online nature of the AGM a virtual presentation of the sticks was made, by ALIA President Robert Knight to President-elect Viv Barton.

b. Thanks to outgoing Board members

Viv Barton thanked the outgoing Directors, Robert Knight OAM, Helen Ebsworth, Paula Kelly Paul and Monika Szunejko for their contribution to the work of the Board. The retiring Directors had been presented with a small token of appreciation on behalf of the ALIA members.

c. 50 year pin presentation

The CEO congratulated Ian McCallum on his 50 years of ALIA membership and presented him with a 50 year gold pin. Ian was also thanked for his service as the Parliamentarian for the AGM.

No further items were raised.



9. Meeting closed

There being no further business, the President thanked members for their attendance and declared the ALIA 2020 Annual General Meeting closed at 6.35pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. ...', written over a horizontal line.

President

11/05/2020

Date