Sustainability
What happens when the baby boomers go?
The many faces of sustainability
ALIA Sustainable Libraries group
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Frontline

I’m actually getting in early for this Frontline. My three previous missives were submitted right on the deadline which – I’m led to believe from some of my predecessors – is a pretty good record. Who knows how long that will last!

As I’m due to go on leave for a month in a few days time, I decided to start writing sooner rather than later as my inspiration and desire to write a Frontline column while I’m on leave could be somewhat lacking. So to give you some idea when I’ve commenced writing this, Queensland has just won its third State of Origin match, Spain just won the world cup, Stephen Conroy has just announced a delay in the internet filtering legislation, and Cadel Evans has just started wearing the Maillot Jaune. Well the best laid plans of mice and librarians haven’t eventuated so I’m now continuing this while I’m holidays.

According to the Macquarie Dictionary sustainable means, “designed or developed to have the capacity to continue operating perpetually, by avoiding adverse effects on the natural environment and depletion of natural resources.” According to that other reliable source, Wikipedia, sustainability is “the capacity to endure”. If you look up sustainability on Google, it advises that there are 35 000 000 results. It’s obviously a popular term.

Librarianship as a profession, career, or activity has obviously been sustained over the course of centuries. As an activity it has continually evolved. There have been numerous times over the past few decades where the role of the library and the roles of those of us who work in libraries has been questioned. I’m sure epitaphs and obituaries have even been prepared for the demise of libraries as institutions and librarianship as a profession.

Indications of our adaptive nature are manifest. One only has to look at new services being offered and new facilities being developed to meet the challenges of an ever changing society and the constant change of technology.

Just as library services and facilities change and adapt, so must ALIA. We certainly can’t take for granted our achievements of the past, and the last thing we should do is rest on our laurels. As I wrote in an earlier piece for *InCite* the sustainability of ALIA is entirely dependent on membership – no members, no fees, no association. That’s why the 2008 Member Survey has been so important to identify those things which members value highly and those things which don’t rate particularly high. The ALIA Board and National Office have been aligning and developing strategies and services to meet these needs.

We need to be responsive to member needs. At the time of writing it looks as if we’re doing that pretty well as membership had increased by 4% at the end of June. This is extremely pleasing as the current trend for member organisations is for membership to reduce rather than grow. While that’s great news, adapting and being responsive is not without its challenges. While organisms often adapt and change over hundreds, if not thousands of years, organisations such as ours don’t have that luxury. Services we’ve offered in the past that once upon a time were heavily used can pretty soon become like an appendix: the organ is no longer required but still remains part of the body. Then if the organ becomes infected it can cause the demise of the body. While I’m not aware of ALIA offering any appendix-like services, we certainly need to remain vigilant that we don’t. It’s the Board’s role to ensure ALIA remains a healthy body, so there will be times when we will take pre-emptive action to prevent the maintenance of an appendix-like service.

Financial sustainability is not a luxury, it’s essential. ALIA is a company limited by guarantee, so the Board has an obligation to ensure the organisation remains solvent. We’re not a large organisation. In terms of finances ALIA’s annual operating budget is less than the salaries budget of my rather small university library. With a relatively small budget ALIA needs to focus on meeting the needs of those who pay membership fees. This is no different from other community/profession-based membership organisations. ALIA has often been seen as a caring and sharing organisation – offering services and activities equally to members and non-members alike. I can assure you the Board and ALIA National Office will continue to focus on providing services and activities for members at the expense of non-members.

ALIA’s role in the sustainability of the profession is key. ALIA is the body that credentials organisations offering library and information training and education, thus underwriting the quality of qualifications for members and non-members alike. It is also a service we currently offer educational institutions and organisations for free. While this is a service that maintains the heart of the organisation and the profession, it is just one example of where we need to see how we can make it run more effectively and more efficiently.

I’m almost out of Frontline mode and back into holiday mode. I’m currently on a train which is advertised as the green way to travel, and last night I bought a can of beer which was branded as being environmentally friendly with green labelling. Sustainability – it’s everywhere and we all need to ensure ALIA remains a most adaptive organisation.

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Sustainability vs Survivability

IFLA 2010 started with a number of pre-conferences, and there was a lovely quote from the Malmo Library Director saying that libraries support communities to be “sustainable, democratic, knowledgeable, and joyful”. But while libraries support their communities, how do they remain sustainable in their own right? You can catch up on all the reports via http://2010.ifla.org or our comments at http://www.alia.org.au/blog.

When I think of sustainable libraries I think of ‘survivable libraries’ (actually, I am not sure if survivable is a real word) – sustaining their growth, activities, services, facilities – so that they can truly serve their customers and present return on investment to their funders. Many libraries have survived funding cuts, the effects of the GFC, or being downsized. Others have used sustainable survival tactics to thrive, grow, and expand. To remain a sustainable library you must be able to justify the existence and worth of your library. ALIA is supporting a number of sectors to develop resources in this area. Statistics and reports are often helpful and we look forward to the completion of projects for the Specials and TAFE areas for this during 2011. Our advocacy materials and advocacy help-line, our Every Member an Advocate workshops, and the National Year of Reading are just some of the ways ALIA helps libraries survive and sustain: http://www.alia.org.au/advocacy/.

There are lots of other sustainable themed articles in this edition of inCite – on Green Libraries, being creative, survival techniques, great projects. Does your library have an initiative that is not mentioned in these pages? You can always submit an article to inCite to let us know what you are doing in your part of Australia.

Election 2010 and Advocacy

By the time this inCite arrives we will know the outcome of the Federal Election. It has been a close race this time, with some unpredictable events. ALIA and other national library associations agreed on a number of topics to focus the government’s attention during the campaign. You will have also been informed of the Parties’ responses to our main issues. We also developed a Federal Election Campaign Kit, in this, our year of focusing on assisting Every Member to be an Advocate. Hundreds of ALIA members have taken the opportunity to attend one of the free workshops to gain skills and discuss possible advocacy projects within their own library, or in the wider sphere.

In some ways the election result is just the start of much work for us at National Office and the Board, to work with the elected government on promises made and existing programs. Our focus will continue to be for funding for national digitisation initiatives, national databases, the National Year of Reading 2012, and for school libraries, as some of the major ones. We hope you found these resources useful as well as all the information available at http://www.alia.org.au/election2010

ALIA Access 2010 Conference – Sold out!

If you missed out on a spot, we hope you accessed ALIA Access 2010 via web streaming, social networking, and your own connections. With the event being sold out (we reached our max of 600 delegate registrations in July), there were quite a number of disappointed potential delegates. May I suggest that you make arrangements well in advance for our 2011 Conferences:

- ALIA Information Online 1–3 February (registrations open now!)
- ALIA National Library & Information Technicians Conference (early 2011)
- ALIA 5th New Librarians Symposium (early 2011)

Inter-library Loan Voucher Review

This review is an important project that we must undertake to meet company audit requirements. If your library deals with ALIA ILL Vouchers, please ensure that you connect with the information and the consultation occurring throughout the rest of the year.

HCL Anderson

On 14 July the ALIA Board of Directors conferred the HCL Anderson Award to Jan Fullerton at the National Library of Australia. The HCL Anderson Award is the Association’s highest honour. Jan Fullerton has made an extraordinary contribution to LIS in Australia, showing outstanding leadership, particularly in her work to make unique Australian library materials accessible to everyone. We congratulate Jan on her many years of accomplishment, and welcome her as a patron of ALIA and our library community.

ALIA’s sustainability

This year’s National Advisory Congress theme is volunteering for ALIA. ALIA relies heavily on its volunteers, but is that the most sustainable model available to us? If you have an opinion don’t forget to attend – more details available http://www.alia.org.au/governance/nac/2010/

Vale Bob McKee

ALIA joins the international library community to share in the loss of Bob McKee, Chief Executive of CILIP who died in August while at IFLA2010. Our thoughts and sympathy go to Bob’s family and friends and the extended CILIP and IFLA family of colleagues that shared his passion for the library profession.

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Dear Editor,

As a retired Special Librarian I was delighted to catch up with the current Special Libraries’ scene in your August issue which is devoted to this sector of the library and information world. However, I was disappointed to see that no librarian from the geosciences, my old area of work, got around to contributing to this issue.

I hope Deanne Barrett and Cathy Brady have been able to get geoscience librarians interested in participating in the Special Libraries Stream at ALIA Access 2010. I am sure they have a lot to offer as they operate many major library-based services which, along with agricultural libraries, represent two of the most important industries in Australia. We did a lot of effective work in delivering value-added services and the creation of a national database at the erstwhile Australian Mineral Foundation, Adelaide, in the 70s to 90s, in conjunction with Federal, State, and industry organisations. There has been much development since then and I hope that geoscience librarians will also strut their stuff and give the rest of their colleagues the benefit of their considerable knowledge, experience, and innovative developments at ALIA Access 2010.

And best wishes for a very successful Special Libraries Stream at the National Conference.

Des Tellis
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Usability vs Sustainability

Sol Trujillo when running Telstra a few years ago optimistically valued the Sensis website at about six billion dollars. I doubted this valuation at the time. Now it would be absolutely nonsensical. Whatever Sensis does these days, it’s completely given up providing a real telephone directory online.

Two recent experiences make clear to me that libraries abandoning paper in favour of Sensis are probably betraying the customers. My search last week for Westpac in NSW – I hadn’t narrowed the search in any way – produced two responses. They were identical, and gave the only Westpac facility of any kind in that state as being at Cherrybrook, on the outskirts of Sydney. A phone book consulted at a shop nearby gave the full list.

Similarly, recent hunts for Sydney bookshops and locksmiths gave incomplete lists. Unlike paper lists, which allow perhaps hundreds of entries to any single page, the Sensis system shows about 15 entries to a page. There is no alphabetisation, and there are multiple entries for one small business. The Cherrybrook duplication is Pattycake. A few locksmith shops had more than half a dozen entries. Put that together with the lack of alphabetisation (and geographical restriction within states and territories) and the small number of entries to a page, and you have a carelessly designed system that, in my experience, means that using Sensis typically can cost the user ten or twenty times as much time and effort as that needed for using the old-fashioned system: learn the alphabet, use it, run your eye or fingers down a page.

I know a full set of telephone directories takes a lot of shelf space, Sensis doesn’t replace them; or try to. Please don’t vanish the paper directories from your shelves.

Paul Lynch
Sydney
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ALIA National Library & Information Technicians 2011 Conference

Back to Basics – Perth 2011
12–16 September 2011
Sheraton Hotel, Perth WA

Sponsorship & Exhibition Opportunities Now Available

The Conference Organising Committee is delighted to advise that the Sponsorship & Exhibition Prospectus is now available. The Committee have developed a range of fantastic packages to promote your organisation at the Conference, and, for the first time, ALIA is offering special rates for organisations wishing to sponsor more than one ALIA Conference.

An exciting exhibition is planned for Libtech 2011, but places are limited – so don’t miss out!

If you would like to receive a copy of the Sponsorship & Exhibition Prospectus, please email libtech2011@iceaustralia.com – today!

Preliminary Program Now Available

Keen to know how the program planning is coming along? A preliminary program for the Conference has now been uploaded onto the website at http://conferences.alia.org.au/libtech2011/program.html

Staying in Touch with Libtech 2011

There are plenty of ways to keep in touch with what is happening in the planning and preparation of Libtech 2011 ‘Back to Basics’ Perth 2011.

Conference Website: http://conferences.alia.org.au/libtech2011/

Facebook: search ALIA National Library & Information Technicians 2011 Conference

Twitter: http://twitter.com/ALIAlibtech

Email: libtech2011@iceaustralia.com

Save The Date – 5th ALIA New Librarians Symposium

16–18 September 2011
Sheraton Hotel
Perth WA

Conference Website

The ALIA 5th New Librarians Symposium website has now been launched. Keep up to date with the progress of the Conference and important dates by visiting the Conference website at http://conference.alia.org.au/NLS5/

Sponsorship & Exhibition Opportunities Now Available

The Organising Committee is pleased to inform that Sponsorship and Exhibition Opportunities are now available! Select from a range of packages available or ask about tailoring a package to meet the needs of your Company.

If you would like to receive a copy of the Sponsorship & Exhibition Prospectus, please email nls5@iceaustralia.com

Call for Abstracts Opening Soon!

Call for Abstracts opens Wednesday 29 September 2011. To submit your abstract visit the Conference website http://conferences.alia.org.au/nls5/ after this date and submit online.

We’ll keep you up to date with more information as the planning of the ALIA 5th New Librarians Symposium takes shape.
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Perfect for public and special libraries, this course focuses on dealing with customers with specific challenging behaviours including those with drug addictions, intellectual disabilities, and mental illness.

Course details:
‘Managing Challenging Clients’
8 Nov 2010

Fundamentals of Supervision
Perfect for new supervisors and those seeking to move into a supervisory position. This course offers guidance and guidelines for transitioning professionals.

Course details:
‘Fundamentals of Supervision’
9 Nov 2010

Leading Others through Change
Perfect for managers with some experience or for those seeking to move into managerial roles. This course recognises that our workplaces are in constant change and offers attendees the essential managerial skill set.

Course details:
‘Leading Others Through Change’
10 Nov 2010

ENROLMENTS CLOSE 22nd Oct 2010
Enrolments open to ALIA members and non-members.

PD Scheme: 1 point per hour
Check out the ALIA Training calendar for details of all ALIA Training courses.

APPLICATIONS CLOSE 22 OCT

Report from Event Management Workshop, Friday 23 July 2010

Picture a grey July day in Sydney; not a great day to sightsee but a good day to share and learn.

My fellow participants from a variety of backgrounds and work places met early. We were greeted by Adam who had set up the ‘venue’ in an appropriate way for our event. With a small but enthusiastic group, our warm up exercise was not difficult. We then paced ourselves through the program starting with the event process. Adam allowed time for us to share related experiences and scenarios mostly on what not to do during events.

After scoping and developing a brief, the group, suitably refreshed by morning tea, moved through to setting and achieving measurable goals. Adam allowed time for us to share related experiences and scenarios mostly on what not to do during events.

After scoping and developing a brief, the group, suitably refreshed by morning tea, moved through to setting and achieving measurable goals. Adam allowed time for us to share related experiences and scenarios mostly on what not to do during events.

During the afternoon we worked in small teams to discuss case studies. We also focused on topics such as advertising, budgeting, and risk assessments. Our workbook provided a reference through the day and I know I will use it to assist in future planning. Thank you to ALIA for this wonderful opportunity. I am sure this course will benefit the children’s team and assist in planning and hosting successful events across the library system here at Gosford.

Claire Stuckey the singing librarian
Childrens Librarian | Library Services
Gosford City Council
claire.stuckey@gosford.nsw.gov.au
Throughout our working life, no matter what position we hold, we are constantly accountable to somebody else. The Prime Minister reports to the people, a CEO reports to a Board, and those of us not fortunate enough to hold such lofty positions are accountable to other managers who may also report further up the management line.

This means that we are invariably bound by directions and desires of other people and, depending on the amount of influence we hold in the organisation, we may not always be able to have a say in the direction, strategy, and policies of the organisation in which we are employed.

So have you considered joining a Board of another organisation and, in particular, ALIA? The ALIA Board of Directors is the elected policy-making body of the Association. There are eight members of the Board, seven of whom are elected: the President, the Vice-President, and five elected Directors.

By becoming a member of the ALIA Board you have the opportunity to shape the future for the organisation; assert influence in topics that matter to you or to the consumers the organisation serves; and ensures the fiscal responsibility and sustainability of the organisation.

Boards can have a variety of models, however, in general, the Board's role is to oversee, evaluate, and review. The Board needs to demonstrate leadership (in partnership with the CEO) and guide the mission and direction of the organisation. The Board also has a statutory responsibility to ensure that standards and due process are followed and maintained.

The skills you may develop while on the ALIA Board could have great benefit in your own organisation and throughout your career:
- Strategic thinking
- Legal, financial, and other professional skills
- Marketing and communication
- Industry-specific skills and knowledge
- Stakeholder management
- Risk management and audit skills
- Reading and understanding financial statements

The Board is the primary link between the organisation and the broader community. As a Board member you must be familiar with the organisation’s programming to clearly articulate the organisation’s mission, accomplishments, and goals. Boards need to develop communication strategies that constantly build public awareness and reach new and broader audiences. This may involve Board members speaking at industry and other conferences and seminars.

Board members are often required to be the media spokespeople for the organisation. This can mean agreeing to be interviewed on a particular issue in the print or electronic media or to compose letters to the editor.

Articulate and influential Board members can be used to lobby politicians and brief government officials about the key issues facing the organisation and its members.

There are many skills that can be developed and honed by being on the ALIA Board. Serving on the ALIA Board can help you build a strong network through connections with other Board members and earn respect from colleagues and further your skill and knowledge base.

ALIA is your association – consider bringing your skills and knowledge to the ALIA Board.

Julie Rae
Board Member
julie.rae@alia.org.au

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A Financial Sustainability Manifesto

From the desk of the Library Provocateur

Glancing around the shelves in my office late one afternoon recently, I was struck by the number of business books published in recent years with the word sustainability in their title. A quick keyword search of the National Library’s catalogue returned 3347 records published since 2001. Without doubt, sustainability has been the watchword of this past decade: driving and guiding the efforts of diverse interests for myriad purposes – not all of them environmental.

In his 2009 book *Strategy for Sustainability*, Adam Werbach reminds us that the word itself was not widely used until 1987. In that year it came to prominence in a seminal UN report on sustainable development, *Our Common Future*, and has not left our consciousness since.

The danger of overuse, of anything except our muscles, is that familiarity breeds both contempt and invisibility – what Michael Pollan (*The Omnivore’s Dilemma*) calls the “danger of floating away on a sea of inoffensiveness.” (Hands up now, all those who can see where this thread is heading?) And so it is, I would suggest, with our professional association. The more we see of it, the closer we become to it, the less obvious are its fundamental challenges – we lose our perspective. In my estimation, by far the most important challenge currently facing ALIA’s Board and management is to achieve financial sustainability. However, anyone who read the 2009 Financial Report will appreciate that we remain a long way from that necessary goal.

But we are not alone in this and should not be embarrassed as an association to meet the challenge head on. I’m not normally a fan of management euphemism, but I can see that the challenges we face do present us with some exciting opportunities for change – positive, long lasting change.

And so my purpose here is not to chide – it is to offer some reflections on how I believe we can achieve a financially sustainable association; and harness that sustainability longer term to achieve our common objects and values. ALIA is, after all, a member organisation and by the act of joining it and paying our dues we agree to be part of a collective purpose.

It is not sufficient therefore to leave the solutions to others – we all have a collective duty to understand what is going on within our association (seek guidance from others on reading financial statements if needs be) and advocate to our elected Board members when and where we believe action is required.

Returning to Werbach for a moment, I’d like to share his definition of a sustainable business: it means, he says, “thriving in perpetuity”. That put simply is my wish for ALIA.

And so, how to achieve this thriving in perpetuity? We will all have our own ideas, and should not be afraid to put them forward for public consideration and discussion. It pains me to see how rarely now members write to the Editor of *inCite* or passionately exchange ideas on an e-list. In that year it came to prominence in a seminal UN report on sustainable development, *Our Common Future*, and has not left our consciousness since.

The following is my Five Point Plan for Financial Sustainability. I present it not to be provocative per se, but to show that challenging times call for new thinking and debate.

1. Do what the Australian Society of Archivists did some years ago and get out of Canberra.

   Please (please!) don’t breathe a word of this to our ACT colleagues, but with the exception of the relatively few weeks that Parliament sits each year, Canberra is not where the underlying business of Australian politics is now transacted. As a colleague leading an influential education peak body pointed out to me recently, until mid July of this year, Australian education policy was largely being driven from Melbourne, not Canberra. Astute observers will guess why.

   Our capital is now effectively a ‘fly in, fly out’ destination for many corporate and not-for-profit interests, particularly those with a narrow interface to government. We should be following their lead and counting the favour of legislators at the source, where questions of policy are actually decided.

2. Sell ALIA House and invest the capital realised from the sale.

   I can only assume that the original decision to build ALIA House in Canberra was based on (for the time) informed political not economic considerations. If it had been guided by economics, my guess is we would now be headquartered on the fringe of the Sydney, Melbourne, or Brisbane CBD, gleefully counting the double digit growth in rental revenues and capital gains.

   My plan for financial sustainability says to sell ALIA House for the best possible price and take advantage of the commercial property market in another city. Or better yet, invest the cash and lease premises. This is not selling the farm – it is following a more sustainable business model.

   And if we still crave proximity to political power, ALIA can always open a branch office in western Sydney, or Queensland!

3. Commercialise a core set of products to create new, long-term income streams.

   I can give no better example here than the modest Online Store operated by the Australian Society of Archivists. Yes, I’m mentioning them a bit, but their business model is instructive. The Society’s product offering may be limited but it creates a steady sales income year after year; in large part from the text *Keeping Archives*, now in its 3rd edition and retailing for $130 including GST. Think what cash flow might be generated for ALIA from the sale of prescribed library and information management texts, member merchandise, and, dare I say it, professional development mandated by a compulsory PD scheme.

   ALIA has long lacked entrepreneurial vision and sadly, it shows in our finances.

4. Cull the number of subsidiary associations and peak bodies competing for support and diluting the central ALIA brand.

   There are now in Australia literally dozens of national and state based library organisations chasing finite members and declining sponsorship dollars. They are all competing to service discrete slices of a professional community established in 2006 to be at best around 25 000 people working in library-related occupations – only 40% of whom (roughly 10 000) were identified as librarians.

   Granted, there is nothing to stop us belonging to more than one organisation, but do we realistically have the time and money to do each (and our profession) justice?

5. Cut the number of library conferences.

   Finally, there seems to be an accepted wisdom in the profession that more conferences make more money. Sadly, in net terms the reverse is actually true. Although ALIA has tried to show leadership on this issue, and with some success, it seems that just as one marginal conference is retired another springs up in its place. While conferences are an important feature of the PD landscape, they do no one any long term good – least of all our association – if they create internal competition for registration and sponsorship dollars.

   If ALIA is to achieve financial sustainability, my plan says we have to be focused on maximising net profits from a very select few conferences each year. I’d go as far as to advocate one annual mega-conference with every interested library sector group and peak body buying a stake in the event – and the profits.

   In closing, I’ll leave you with a quote from Richard Bach: “What the caterpillar calls the end of the world the master calls a butterfly”.

   Financial sustainability is ultimately about creating for ALIA and its membership the freedom to act and choose. Now that’s an idea worth putting in a little red book!

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What happens when the baby boomers go?

This paper was originally presented in full at NLS4 2008.

Fairfield City Council’s vision to be an employer of choice is spelled out in Our People Our Future: a human resources strategic plan 2007 -2011. Several key components of this plan are developing a positive organisational culture, growing and rewarding our own talent, and fostering workforce flexibility, innovation, and diversity. We needed to implement these strategies into our thinking and planning for the Library Service to remain relevant for our community and the future. In order to get some clear data we conducted a staff survey in September 2008. We used Survey Monkey and each staff member was emailed the link to the survey online.

Summary of Staff Survey Results
There were a total of 56 responses out of a possible 70 staff including casuals. Approximately 51% are over 45, reflecting statistics collected by the Federal Department of Employment (McCarthy, 2005). 10.9% of our staff expect to be retired in 5 years’ time and 25.5% in 10 years’ time. This means that we need to consider how we are going to fill these places most effectively.

ATTRACTING AND RETAINING STAFF – GROWING AND REWARDING OUR OWN TALENT

Attracting younger staff
How do we recruit younger staff? One method is to employ young people in partnership with local high schools. One of our staff employment agencies worked with the careers advisor at a local high school to recruit students to work in the library. A group of students were tested and interviewed by the agency. Five young people, aged from 15 to 18, began training in May 2008. Training was held after school hours with the proviso that school work came first. These students are now working regular weekend shifts and longer hours in the school holidays. None have dropped out and all are keen for more work. We pay above award rates and as they turn 18 they go on to the standard Library Assistant rate.

Secondments
On-the-job learning environments can be developed through temporary secondments to vacant positions. An expression of interest in the position is circulated and suitably qualified people are encouraged to apply. The secondment is usually for six to nine months and gives the staff member the opportunity to learn and develop skills while being supported in the new situation. Sometimes, of course, the secondment process clarifies for the staff member concerned that this is not an area they want to pursue long term.

Rotation
Another way of staff upskilling is through our rotation process. Every two years staff are moved to another location or team within their existing position level. This allows them to experience the very different demographics and customer bases of another location. It also gives them the opportunity to work with a new team and to learn new skills. At our main library, staff can move into specialist teams such as IT, Housebound, and Collections and Assets. Some of our positions are non-rotating due to the specialist skills required (e.g. our outreach librarians and direct report positions), but most staff, including our branch librarians are on the rotation schedule.

Mentoring
We use Events Teams to plan, manage, promote, and evaluate the major events we run each year. These include HSC lectures, Summer Reading program, Library Lovers Day, and Library and Information Week. A staff member from each branch is part of the team. The team brainstorms ideas for the event then decides what training and mentoring is required. Team members with the requisite skills and experience – writing press releases, designing fliers, booking presenters, caterers, venues, and equipment, uploading information to the website or intranet, etc – buddy with less experienced staff to help build skills and confidence. The aim of this process is to give as many staff as possible the opportunity to learn and practice new skills.

Cross-organisational teams and projects
Library staff can feel distant from the overall vision of the organisation they represent. This can be due to geographic separation and a lack of understanding of how the library fits in the overall strategic plan. One way to improve this is to encourage staff to join cross-organisational teams and projects including IT planning, intranet co-ordination, culture coaching, cultural planning, OH&S committee, and EEO/Diversity Working party, to name just a few. These projects raise the library service's profile with other staff, leading to new partnerships and projects as well as an appreciation for the range of skills and experience that library staff members bring to a broad range of community issues.

DEVELOPING A CONSTRUCTIVE ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Organisational culture
Attracting staff in the first place and then offering them suitable, timely learning and development opportunities is still only part of the answer to creating and managing an effective workforce. Another key area is that of staff morale and sense of belonging. Fairfield City Council has been actively working on improving its organisational culture since 2000. “Culture coaches” were introduced to facilitate the process of change within each department and workplace across the organisation. The Library Service has two culture coaches who work with library teams as well in other divisions of Council.

Fun days
Full staff meetings are held twice a year and both a morning and afternoon session are run to ensure all staff (including casuals) can attend. We cover the usual information but also try to make the meetings very interactive and lots of fun. Staff enjoy the opportunity to use their creativity. An example from a recent staff meeting was that staff were asked to design the library worker of the future. Teams used collage, gluing, cutting, and pasting, but also needed to think through what was important to our profession now, and what would continue to be important in the future. Even such dry topics as OH&S can be enlivened with a board game or quiz and, of course, prizes.

WORKFORCE FLEXIBILITY, INNOVATION AND DIVERSITY

It is important that our staff reflect the diversity of the community. Our survey showed that our staff spoke 19 languages other than English between them. 58% of our staff were born overseas. This is obviously an important component in helping our customers feel valued, understood, and respected, but it also places value on the cultural diversity of our staff.
The variety and diversity of our staff provides amazing potential, but it is not always easy to encourage staff to think and work creatively in their day-to-day work. We use games as the basis of our staff development. First ‘BINGO’ to encourage staff to be involved in thinking about the services, programs, and resources we offer and promoting them to our customers. This was designed around some of our key functions – Cultural Awareness, Marketing, Team Work, Training, Technology, Personal Development, Fun, Sustainability, Readers’ Advisory, Innovation, OH&S, and Motivation. For each heading there was a task for staff to do which encouraged them to reflect on their own work practice. We are currently working through ‘Hopscotch’ – an interactive process that builds staff readers’ advisory skills.

CONCLUSIONS

While we have taken measures to try to ensure that we recruit and retain staff that will have opportunities to develop their potential, these measures are not enough to ensure that we have a well trained workforce that will meet the growing needs of our community into the future. Individual organisations need to strive to be ‘employers of choice’ so that prospective recruits are attracted to our industry. We also need to recruit and keep staff that have a genuine interest in people and events, flexibility, innovation, initiative, are IT savvy, and have a desire to learn and encourage that ability in others. We need to do effective, long-term planning to ensure the ongoing viability of the profession. More flexible work practices may be one possibility. Salary levels need to be reviewed so that skilled people are retained in the Library Sector rather than moving into more lucrative positions in other sectors. If we don’t act we may face a situation where we simply cannot staff our library services in the future. Libraries are an essential part of providing an increasingly diverse population with equitable, accessible information and learning resources as well as a welcoming place to use regularly throughout their lives. Libraries are too important for us to risk their future by lack of planning and foresight.

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REFERENCES


Food for fines

In the lead up to Christmas, Hobsons Bay Libraries ran a four-week Food for Fines campaign. After hearing of the success of the program at Geelong Regional Libraries in 2008, we were keen to try it for ourselves and what a wonderful experience it was!

Food for Fines is a variation on the traditional fines amnesty and gives customers the opportunity to donate items of food instead of paying for their fines. In our campaign customers could have $10 of overdue charges waived for each item of food.

Permission was obtained for the amnesty from Council in August 2009 and the positive press coverage began immediately with articles in three local newspapers. When the campaign began in November, another two articles appeared in the local media.

The Councillors at Hobsons Bay were very supportive of the concept. In the lead up library staff were assisted by Community Development Staff in building relationships with the relevant Community Groups who could distribute the food.

We worked in partnership with local Emergency Relief Agencies. Library staff collected the food from the community and waived the fines, and then their volunteers collected the items from our branches, packaged them up as hampers, and distributed them the week before Christmas.

During the four weeks of the amnesty, just over $5500 in overdue charges were waived and almost 1300 items of food were received. As well as customers taking the opportunity to clear long outstanding fines we also welcomed many donations from customers and council staff just wanting to contribute to their local community at Christmas time. The hampers created reached more than 200 homes in our local community.

During and after the campaign I received lots of positive feedback from customers and great stories were shared amongst the staff. Some customers were appreciative of the opportunity to clear their fines and other customers were glad to have a convenient location to make a charitable donation. Overwhelmingly the requests were for a follow-up in 2010...and this month approval was received to make Food for Fines an annual event!

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The ALIA Sustainable Libraries Group is a network of library staff who are interested in promoting the principles and practice of sustainability in all Australian libraries. To be sustainable is to meet the needs of today’s society in a way that doesn’t harm the ability of future generations to meet their needs. The consumption of finite resources, sustainable development, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions are key concerns of society, and therefore of libraries. The ALIA Sustainable Libraries Group focuses on the key areas of sustainability as applicable to the operation of libraries.

The aims of the Sustainable Libraries Group are to:
- Develop and advocate best practice
- Support and contribute to research
- Provide and publicise professional development
- Increase the awareness of environmental concerns among library staff
- Enhance and promote documentary resources and library services connected to sustainability (development of collections on environmental themes, exhibitions, outreach, etc.)
- Consider the effects of climate change on libraries (modification of the conditions of storage and preservation, building insulation, impacts on library finances, and management)
- Share information and ideas about the application of environment-friendly practices in libraries, or transferable to libraries (recovery of rain water, power supply from renewable energies, control of printings, etc.).

Consider how we recycle items including serials, newspapers, and books
- The proposal of environmental recommendations (including retrofitting) to be used in standard practice for the profession
- Foster co-operation, collaboration, and the sharing of knowledge and ideas relating to sustainable practices among library staff from libraries across the country.

The ALIA Sustainable Libraries Group will be launched at the ALIA Access conference in Brisbane thanks to the assistance of Craig Milne, Sonja Barfoed, and Heather Coutts. Members of the ALIA Sustainable Libraries Group conference committee will be at the ALIA Access 2010 conference in Brisbane. The 2010 Sustainable Libraries Group Committee office bearers are Katie Hannan, Convenor, Anne Melles, Secretary, Tric Bowman, Treasurer.

If you are interested in joining the ALIA Sustainable Libraries Group, please contact the author.

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For a number of years St George College Library has been fortunate enough to have a room that the college had given to the library for exclusive use as a literacy room. This has meant that when teachers bring students in for literacy classes, library staff have been able to give detailed instruction in literacy theory. The weakness has always been that to practice the theory students have had to move to a computer room within the library – this computer room can be difficult for library staff to use as teachers can pre-book it for class use. A further weakness with this set up is that all theory (up to one hour) must be given in one hit and then all hands-on practice done in one go – not good teaching practice.

For several years library staff at St George have put together a proposal to obtain funds from the Institute to allow for the literacy room to be fitted out with computers. This year we were successful! The library literacy room fit out is now complete and boasts 16 computers, custom-built desks, ergonomic chairs, a ceiling short-throw projector, speakers, and the capability to run VHS and DVD to the projector.

For the library staff this means that even if a teacher books a literacy session last minute they are guaranteed to have a room ready to go as the room can’t be booked by anyone else at the college. For students it means that they won’t need to listen to one hour of theory first – they can learn one aspect of literacy and practice it, listen to and learn the next section and practice it, etc.

Library staff at St George College wish to acknowledge the wonderful support of the College Management Team in recognising the important role that library staff play in increasing information literacy skills of students and in the need to library staff to always have a room at their disposal to run the many and varied information literacy sessions that they provide.

If library staff are not using the room and the library computer room is booked, teachers can also take classes into the literacy room, although it won’t be bookable to anyone other than library staff thus preserving the ability to deliver short notice literacy sessions.

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Investment in sustainable learning at St George College

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I find projections of a skill shortage when baby boomer librarians begin to retire and the focus on encouraging young people into the industry as the solution intriguing. I wonder whether the challenge may actually be one of managing sufficient numbers who are mobile and minimally trained, rather than one of scarcity.

In 2003, I completed a Graduate Diploma of Information Management, a fast and light introduction to the required skill set. The great majority of students were middle aged; another great majority were already employed in the industry. Obviously these overlapped. The picture of people undertaking tertiary library qualifications was therefore of middle-aged people planning to remain in the industry and looking to improve their participation through study and ultimately more responsible appointments; middle-aged people with experience in other industries investing significant time, energy, and money to enter the industry; and younger people, some wanting to enter the industry, others consolidating careers already begun.

The GDIM completed, I found getting a job difficult. A lecturer had advised me to emphasise my marks when applying for jobs, to counter my lack of library experience; this wasn’t particularly effective. At NLS4, many people said that short-term contract work was the way (eventually) (perhaps) to get a permanent job. I didn’t take up that option because, being used to a permanent position and full-time income with the usual related encumbrances (mortgage, etc), living contract-to-contract did not appeal. Instead I took the other option, dramatic or drastic depending on your view, and moved to a remote area for my first job. This experience is not unusual.

That is not the picture of an industry even beginning to scrabble for staff. That jobs are changing rather than increasing in number; that certain sectors, eg school libraries, are contracting; and that the costs and strains of insecure employment or major relocation are personalised and accepted as normal, indicates an industry generating a reserve pool of un- or under-employed.

The picture at Alice Springs Public Library (ASPL) where I work, also counters suggestions of a looming skills shortage or that recruiting young people is the answer: ASPL has 13 permanent staff, five are new graduates or new starters, that they’ve entered the industry in the last five years. Of six casuals, four are new to the industry and three of those are undertaking library studies. Of the newbies, including the casuals, four are baby boomers, three are in their thirties, and the remaining two are in their twenties. At ASPL, many of the newcomers are as grey-haired as those expected to retire in the next decade.

The oldest casual, and one of the most reliable, is a woman past retirement age who has returned to the industry after many years; she is only interested in casual work. Another, also much called upon, is much younger, has worked in ‘heaps of libraries’, is passionate about them, but has no intention of getting a permanent library position. Another, also approaching retirement age, loves the library because it’s the first place to give her work after undertaking the retraining that so many injured older workers find so fruitless (her study wasn’t related to the industry); she too is not looking for a permanent position but she is committed to the library. So the casuals who aren’t aiming for a job intend nevertheless to work as often as they’re asked (and frankly ASPL can’t offer them anything more than casual work anyway).

Other aspects of the picture at ASPL reflect broader social trends: most of the staff are women, and a lot of women don’t have enough superannuation to retire early. The other baby boomer newbie and I are or have been supporting parents and have the amount of superannuation that you might therefore expect. We will be working until retirement age, unless we somehow get extraordinarily lucky – that’s at least thirty years in the industry between us.

The oldest staff member at ASPL is approaching seventy: she is still working partly because “there’s so much going on [in the industry, she] can’t retire” and partly because there are incentives to keep working until 70. Those incentives and the rising age eligibility for the aged pension are bound to keep some people in the industry.

Finally, the youngest staff member is considering leaving until her children are at school: childcare on trainee wages and the hours of day care, pre-school, and full time work are difficult joggles. If she leaves, she will be hoping for another traineeship when she can return.

ASPL staff exhibit these characteristics: stability – the three longest serving staff have worked for nearly eighty years between them; new blood; a high level of commitment to the industry either through study or being available to work whenever required; the work-life ‘balancing act’; and age cohorts reflecting an ageing population.

Secondary students are told that they will not have a job for life; rather they will work at a number of jobs in up to six industries during their working life. That’s between six and ten years per industry. It’s conceivable that the first industry they work in may be one they leave promptly and never return to; it’s likely that it won’t be the one they finish working in.

Alternatively, changing careers requires a significant investment; late new starters will want to work long enough to justify it. I wonder whether the workforce will be characterised not by scarcity but simply by the opposite of the industry’s traditional stability: enough staff, who span working life but are concentrated in the pepper-and-salt or definitely grey-haired brigades, who spend a limited time in the industry and whose skills may not be as established, their training as comprehensive as is normal now. Support for new starters should be spread across all age cohorts because chances are they will all contribute equivalently.

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Best practices observed

OCLC Research commissioned a study of current ILL practices by California Environmental Associates, a firm of environmental impact consultants. Using data provided by OCLC and gathered during interviews with staff at a dozen US libraries, the consultants correlated specific interlibrary practices with measurable impacts on greenhouse gas emission levels. These findings, along with key recommendations and best practices, are included in the report, which is available for free download at http://www.oclc.org/research/publications/library/2010/2010-07.pdf. It’s also cataloged in WorldCat.
The School of Information Studies (SIS) at Charles Sturt University (CSU) is developing a dynamic and varied research agenda which explores a range of issues important to the library and information profession. The emphasis of the program is on the relationships between people, information, and technology, as in the world’s schools, as well as on the areas of information literacy and information practice. Human information behavior (HIB), as a broad field of study encompassing information needs, information seeking, information use, and information literacy, is also part of the research program. It should be noted that these three key areas involve some overlap, especially in relation to information technology. Studies being undertaken by the School’s PhD students have synergies with research being undertaken by staff, adding depth to the overall research program of the School.

In the area of information literacy and information practice, current staff research focuses on the information practices of immigrant settlers in rural and regional Australia. The project involves collaboration between SIS researchers, Wagga Wagga Public Library, and the Multicultural Council of Wagga Wagga. Other staff research being conducted in the information practice area focuses on the relationship between information practice and fire-fighting safety. Further dimensions are added through the work of doctoral students, which includes a study exploring information literacy in relation to the perceptions of users about these changes. A particular perspective is the role of news media in meeting needs for everyday life information. Another project, in the planning stage, focuses on the role of web technology to assist people with mental illness. This will be a Canadian/Australian study and will involve a Canadian visiting professor who will spend six weeks working in SIS this year. Yet another project examines the validity of the RDA (Resource Description and Access), the new cataloguing standard designed for the digital world, and aims to gauge which of all the RDA elements are the most critical in a university library context.

The research of several SIS PhD students also has a focus on the implications of the web for human society. For example, Australia’s increasing digital culture, related to issues surrounding democracy, is being considered in one PhD study. In another, in which collaboration between a teacher and a teacher-librarian is key a component, the use of web 2.0 technologies to support secondary school student learning, is being explored.

Finally, in the broad area of HIB, two innovative student projects stand out. In the first example, a USA-based PhD student is undertaking cutting edge research focusing on the role of information in successful ageing. This student’s work builds directly on the PhD studies of his CSU principal supervisor. Study participants are people in the Fourth Age, most of whom are in the category sometimes labelled “the oldest old” (85 years of age and older). As far as can be ascertained, no other research has looked at this group from an information perspective, since the tendency is to believe that information is no longer relevant. Yet the findings of the study show that these assumptions are not well-founded.

Finally, reflecting a strong commitment to research training for information professionals, the School is now providing students with a pathway to doctoral studies through the introduction of an Honours program. This is one of the very few Australian Honours programs, aiming to encourage practitioners to consider research for the future. It will also enable students to develop research skills that are of value in the workplace, to undertake evidence-based practice, and will allow them to delve deeply into a subject, issue, or problem in which they have an interest or about which they have curiosity.

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Sustainability key to Macquarie University's new library

Sustainability is nothing new to Macquarie University Library. We created our own Sustainability Working Group in 2008 and have since instituted many changes as we strive to become a more environmentally friendly organisation.

Some simple measures we have taken in recent years include:
- setting all printers (staff & student) to black & white double-sided printing as default
- providing mobile phone, printer cartridge, and battery recycling points in the library
- giving used paper to a nearby childcare centre
- replacing the use of taxis with environmentally friendly ‘Green Tomato Cars’

A staff photo competition on sustainability was run earlier this year with the winning photo *Five “Green” Bottles* by Caroline Dumapit reproduced here.

These have been small but effective steps and helped the library take second place in the University’s inaugural Sustainability Challenge in 2009 (behind the Faculty of Arts – Dean’s Office & Administration). The Challenge measured participating departments in areas such as energy use, disposal of waste, staff participation, and governance.

The scope for improving our sustainability has been limited until now by our present library building which dates from the 1960s and 70s. The decision in 2006 to construct a new library building allowed us not only to design a library that is learner-centred, but also to incorporate new standards of environmental sustainability into the project.

**Sustainable future – new library – what next?**

If you’ve been to Macquarie University lately, you’ve probably seen the new library building fast taking shape on the southern side of the campus. As part of a university that has had a dedicated Sustainability Office for a number of years and has just won a NSW Government Green Globe Award, sustainability was always going to be a key component in the planning, design, and maintenance of the new library building.

Our intention with this project is to achieve a five-star Green Star rating under the Green Building Council of Australia’s Education v1 rating tool, making the new library the first building at the university to use this tool. Green Star is a comprehensive, national, voluntary, environmental rating system that evaluates the environmental design and construction of buildings.

The library is being built where possible from material that is either renewable or recycled, such as concrete. The design process took into account the expected life cycle of the building, including the eventual disposal or recycling of materials used in the construction.

Inside, the building will be divided into zones where motion sensors can adjust lighting and air conditioning depending on the activity in a given zone. The library will also have an online Building Management System with automatic monitoring providing feedback on air quality, water usage, and emissions.

Improving the air quality in the building by reducing the presence of formaldehydes and volatile organic compounds (VOC) in the air is a key goal, and this will in part be achieved by having ventilation rates that exceed industry standards by 50%.

Furniture for the new library will have Good Environmental Choice – Australia (GECA) certification where possible and similar standards will apply to future purchases of equipment and furniture. Durability is another important issue, especially given that we have an average of 5500 visits a day and expect this figure to double in the future. The less we replace furniture and equipment, the more sustainable we can be. The library will also include bike racks and showers to encourage our staff to ride or walk to work.

**Innovation Areas and Education**

One of the Green Star credit points the library will be addressing is innovation. The most significant innovation in the new library is the Automated Storage & Retrieval System (ASRS) where much of our collection will be held. A major sustainability benefit of the ASRS is that our large collection will be stored in a footprint just one seventh the size that traditional shelving would have required. This means the library building does not need to be as large as an open access collection would ordinarily demand, allowing more space for study and research, as well as reducing our energy consumption. And, as the ASRS is humidity regulated, it will help ensure the conservation of our collection.

Another innovation in our new library will be the ‘green roof’. The roof will feature drought tolerant native plants, drip irrigation, and will collect rainwater. The collected rainwater will be used to water the plants and in the library toilets.

Within the library itself, there will be learning resources and space dedicated to educating others about what we are doing for sustainability. The new building will be used as a case study for students doing a variety of environmental subjects and will be incorporated as part of campus tours on sustainability practices within the university. Library staff will in effect become ambassadors for sustainability and will actively help in the education of others.

Becoming sustainable is a stated Macquarie University goal, and with the new library building, Macquarie University Library is continuing to lead the way.

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*Five Green Bottles, Caroline Dumapit*
Many faces of sustainability

Like many others, I read the list of topics for the sustainability inCite and pondered – “is there one of those that I could write an article about?” I tossed around various ideas before a thunderbolt struck. As the 1955 song love and marriage, sung by Frank Sinatra, goes “you can’t have one without the other”. Here is what I mean:

Professional sustainability – in our library staff of eight, there have been three retirements in the last 6 months, taking about 100 years experience and knowledge out of the library in one short period. How do we make libraries a viable career option for a new generation? By providing excellent education in the field, that is relevant to the skills that today’s workforce will need. In other words, by educational sustainability. For library trainers and educators to know which skills and abilities graduates will need, they need examples from the real library world, right across the spectrum – environmentally sustainable libraries, libraries where staff skills are sustained in new and emerging areas, next generation libraries budgeting under reduced circumstances for financial sustainability. To be a viable career option we must provide staff with opportunities to act in higher roles where possible, mentor and nurture the best and brightest to make not only their career but our professional future just that – bright and the best.

Educational sustainability – our trainers need to have a real understanding of the new directions in libraries – not to have just read about them. They need to have experienced and worked with these emerging areas. Systems such as ‘return to work’ for library educators or guest lecturers from cutting edge practitioners are all vital to maintain. Work placement is, I believe, another crucial factor – let the student experience first hand what a library of the 21st Century really is. Some people still enter the field because it is a nice, quiet environment.

Workplace sustainability – does having staff who are encouraged to give it a go, to provide excellent services, who have a strong team focus and commitment, and who want to stay because it is a great place to work come first, or, does providing the opportunity for staff to go useful staff developments and then apply that knowledge to their work and share it with their colleagues come first! Another real issue for workplace sustainability is giving the library manager, no matter what the sector of the economy, full control over their staff makeup – no ‘jobs for the boys’ or passing poor staff around an enterprise. So too, staff unwilling to keep their skills up-to-date need to see that their hesitation has widespread implications for the whole library.

Our social sustainability will be a direct result of our financial sustainability and an indirect result of our skills and environmental sustainability. With our current skills we can engage in a whole new range of ways with new clients. These new clients, like our traditional ones, may come to view us as indispensable and we can add them to our advocacy bank. Skilled up library staff in an organisation can breach the technology divide and act as technology enablers and educators and further push our indispensability. What better way to prove our indispensability than providing financial benefits to our organisation? Library staff are in an excellent position to facilitate movement to electronic document delivery – saving postage, staff time, and more; and electronic repositories for knowledge – saving costs in terms of space, staff time in hunting down misplaced documents, and much more.

As each library makes moves towards sustainability, we need to remember that the term sustainability is much bigger than the green theme we so often hear in the media.

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100 and counting

In the centenary year of the Mitchell Library, along with a landmark exhibition and other celebratory events, the State Library of NSW commenced a sustainability initiative – an organisational gift that we hope will keep on giving!

Greening the Library, as the initiative is named, supports the library’s strategic priorities, which include environmental sustainability. Two of the State Library’s top line KPIs underpin this commitment.

The program kicked off in early 2010, with a call for staff to nominate to join the team. This keen staff group drives the program and engages with our staff to improve the organisation’s environmental performance. Current areas of focus are reducing staff paper consumption and overall energy use.

Activities include a weekly ‘Green tips’ staff blog posting. These include messages encouraging low effort and impactful behavioural changes, such as how to set PCs to double-sided printing and the energy reduction benefits of turning off computer monitors.

The Greening the Library team is also delivering presentations to all our teams, which is proving most worthwhile in gathering ideas and feedback. We are also monitoring blogs and other professional literature, and engaging with our sister local cultural and creative institutions about this critical issue.

From these small beginnings, we will develop a larger program while acknowledging amenity upgrades already achieved, such as provision of bike racks and showering facilities, supporting staff cycling to work.

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On a clear winter’s day Cooroy Library was officially opened at Mill Place. More than 1500 people gathered to celebrate the June 6 opening, enjoying a range of free family fun activities.

The Cooroy Library is a state of the art facility; bringing Sunshine Coast’s fastest broadband free to the community via wireless technology and the Global Connect Computer Training facility. Along with public meeting rooms, a heritage study room, and a children’s play area, this library provides a remarkable community hub. The library is scheduled to hold about 20000–25000 items for loan, with access to all materials held by any public library on the Sunshine Coast.

The construction costs for the library were approximately $9.7 million dollars, $3.5 million of which was secured from the Queensland State Government through the Q150 program.

On an environmental note, the building has been cut into the ground, and part of the roof itself is covered with soil and grass. These elements help control the variation of internal temperatures between day and night, reducing the amount of heat the building ‘soaks up’ during the day. There is the added benefit of the grass roof providing an excellent community space, where people meet, picnic, and read at any time.

Throughout the building, there are high levels of diffused natural lighting, provided through glass walls and elevated windows in the middle lantern section and eastern façade. With this high level of natural day lighting, the building requires less artificial lighting during the day time for the normal functioning of the library, translating in reduced energy consumption.

Photo voltaic cells have been mounted on the roof that are capable of generating 5kW of green power, equivalent to approximately 40% of the building’s internal lighting needs.

An exciting addition to the Sunshine Coast’s library services, the Cooroy Library is already proving to be the community centre that it strived for. The local community and greater Sunshine Coast community are already benefiting from the new facility, with everyone looking forward to the growing success of the library.

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Images courtesy of Phill Jackson Photography
Iconic green hub under development in southern Adelaide

Woodcroft library is one of six public libraries in the City of Onkaparinga in South Australia. Since 1991 the original building housing the library has also been home to a neighbourhood centre, housing, health, and allied health services making it a busy community hub for residents in this city. The building design has struggled to meet the needs of all the users as an integrated service and has proved to be an expensive building to run. After many years of planning the building was temporarily closed for redevelopment in April this year. The new building will provide the community with a fresh modern facility which will also showcase the latest in green technologies.

Key initiatives of the project include installing solar power and a more energy efficient heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system. It also includes a building management system which has room sensors to control lighting. Additionally the project will have a rainwater and stormwater harvesting system for reticulation, water-use metering and sub-metering, and will offer replacement of all taps and cisterns with 6-star WELS rated fittings.

Through these measures the City of Onkaparinga expects to decrease energy used by the building by 65%. The rainwater and stormwater harvesting system aims to capture a surplus 400 000 litres of water to be shared with the neighbouring Woodcroft College.

The new building will open towards the end of this year as an integrated library, neighbourhood centre, and customer service point for the city. An interactive trail will be established within the building to inform building users of the green initiatives in place, and staff and volunteers will be trained to answer questions from the community. The library will support this educative role with a targeted collection.

This exciting new initiative will encourage our community to learn new ways to conserve water and energy and, where possible, apply what they have learned to their daily lives.

Bridget Coulter
Team Leader
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Arts impression of Woodcroft library
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Reducing VU Library’s environmental footprint

The Victoria University (VU) Library is in a unique position to promote green initiatives to its community due to its role within the university. In addition to increasingly providing electronic resources (e-books, databases and e-journals) rather than print, the library has taken other positive actions to contribute towards a more environmentally sustainable VU.

The library encourages staff to use various communication modes such as Microsoft Office Communicator for meetings instead of travelling between campuses, as well as to discuss sustainability in staff meetings and to incorporate sustainable work practices in their work plans. As an early adopter of an intranet platform, the library has been able to reduce the need to print or email versions of documents and to enable staff to contribute to and edit documents online from any location. As a result it has been able to replace paper forms with electronic forms for infringements, the collection of statistics, meter readings, and other administration tasks.

There are 900+ open access computers across the VU Libraries which have been installed with automatic shut-down software to conserve power. This program allows each campus library to designate shutdown times for the computers which aligns with library closing times. In addition to this, library staff shut down staff computers at the end of the day and power-saver functions are enabled on all photocopiers and printers.

To encourage patrons to reduce their environmental footprint, the library offers double-sided (duplex) printing at a reduced price as well as a free scan-to-email service from photocopiers for all staff and students. The library also uses 100% recycled paper in all staff and open access photocopiers and printers as well as having a well-established commitment to recycling used material including paper, cardboard, toners, computers, and furniture through the university recycling program.

VU Library has had a longstanding commitment to reducing its environmental footprint and will continue to be environmentally responsible in everything we do.

Miriam Ruscigno
Acting Marketing Librarian
(with contributions from a number of library staff, including Jenny Tripp)
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SALIN: a Library and Information Network turns 10

Ten years ago, a group of newly minted library professionals formed the South Australian Library and Information Network (SALIN), channeling their energy into proactive professional development and networking. SALIN saw significant growth, and in 2003, four of its founding members wrote a paper 1 outlining the progress they’d made, the challenges they anticipated, and the safeguards they’d adopted to ensure SALIN a sustainable future. SALIN is now 10 years old, the executive committee consists of an entirely new membership, and the committee is still going strong. So how did a group of relatively new information professionals turn an unfunded, grassroots group, into a professional organisation that is viable in the long term?

Not only were the original members of SALIN enthusiastic enough to establish a committee, they also took time to plan for its future, thinking beyond their own membership. Although there is no formal succession plan, executive committee members have staggered their departures in such a way that organisational knowledge is largely maintained. Vacancies are filled quickly, and the committee size has stayed relatively consistent, ranging from 7 to 10 executive members.

From very early on, SALIN’s vision, objectives, and membership structure were documented and a file sharing system was established to host minutes, agendas, promotional, and administrative materials. The system is simple and strong and provides a good foundation.

Moreover, because the vision itself is clear – to provide inexpensive opportunities to network and engage in professional development through a collegial and supportive environment – the planning and decision making process is simplified. Long standing events, such as ‘Day in the Life’ and ‘Ready to Apply’ are perennially popular, on topic, and provide a starting point at each year’s annual planning meeting. Because the format is familiar, the work that goes into each of these events is significantly less than the activity that goes into something completely novel.

Despite having well documented policy, clear objectives, and overarching goals, the committee is always willing to accommodate a great idea and a change of direction. In 2008, the committee had the opportunity to screen The Hollywood Librarian and rearranged their schedule to ensure it happened. More recently, the executive committee recognised the untapped potential of the SALIN website, appointed a webmaster, and began a redesign. Organisation of such events and projects is time consuming, but professionally rewarding and rejuvenating. Importantly, project work is usually divided among small working groups, which allows committee members to pursue projects of special interest. Letting people play to their strengths means more projects on the table, and very stimulating monthly meetings!

No matter how strong the foundation and adaptable its agenda, a committee that does not engage with its community falls apart. SALIN has a good relationship with other professional organisations, as evidenced by partnerships on projects such as ‘Ready to Apply’, and involvement of committee members, past and present, in ALIA work.

In SALIN’s experience, there are always new professionals or LIS students who value the informal, inexpensive support network offered by the committee, and want to contribute to their chosen profession, develop their skills, and improve their employability. By coming to events, participating in online discussions, and maintaining their membership, the library community shows its support of SALIN and greatly contributes to its success.

SALIN is sustainable because people want to be involved; to give back to the profession, to develop professionally, to engage. The atmosphere is collegial, and the recruitment is the very best sort, primarily word of mouth, which speaks volumes about the satisfaction of its membership.

Ten years ago, SALIN’s founding members wanted to make the most of their professional lives. By documenting the steps taken, recognising the importance of flexibility, and engaging the community, they laid the groundwork for a sustainable network. Here’s to another 10 years.

If you’d like to join SALIN, it’s free to do so! You can sign up at https://listserv.flinders.edu.au/mailman/listinfo/salin

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In recent years I have been interested in issues surrounding climate change, but felt that I lacked depth of understanding. So, earlier this year, I enrolled in a Carbon Accounting course. It was enlightening and sobering: enlightening because I was introduced to ‘the carbon cycle’, and taught how to determine carbon sources and calculate carbon emissions, sobering because I gained a much clearer understanding of our dwindling resources, and the impact of higher carbon levels in our atmosphere.

Part of the course assessment was undertaking a carbon audit and report for an organisation. What better place to start than my own workplace, Swinburne University of Technology, Hawthorn campus library in Melbourne? I want to share a few of the concepts, calculations, and considerations I came across in the Carbon Accounting course.

First, what does it mean to go carbon neutral? For an organisation, it simply means reducing the overall climate impact to zero. This usually involves a three part process:

1. measuring carbon emissions,
2. reducing emissions, and
3. offsetting the remaining emissions.

So what are the main sources of library carbon emissions?

Emission sources from any library include: lighting, heating, and cooling; computers and other equipment; transportation - commuting to work, carpooling, air travel, intercampus delivery of books; paper and other stationery; waste; and refrigerant leakage from fridges and air conditioning.

Swinburne Hawthorn library is large, very busy, and open 24 hours. Our door count is over 1.6 million people per year, and over 90% of our carbon emissions is electricity usage.

Electrical usage is measured in kilowatt hours (kwh) and, in 2009, our library used 2 021 113 kwh of electricity producing 2465.76 tonnes of CO2-e (carbon dioxide equivalents). CO2 is used as an equivalence benchmark because it is the most prevalent emission and allows us to calculate as accurately as possible the Global Warming Potential (GWP) of all emissions on our atmosphere. Thus, CO2 has a GWP of 1, methane is 21, and the gas in many refrigerators has a GWP of 1300 CO2-e!

So, having determined and calculated its carbon emissions, what steps could a library take to become carbon neutral?

The Carbon Management Principles of Victoria’s Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are considered best practice and provide a framework from which future actions can be prioritised. The key strategies around these principles are: Avoid, Reduce, Switch, Sequester, Assess, and Offset.

Avoid and Reduce

There are many ways a library can avoid and reduce emissions. Smart building design or retrofitting can ensure lighting, heating, and cooling is reduced, as can purchasing new equipment with high efficiency ratings and minimising wastage of every resource used. Sensors to cut energy when rooms or buildings are not in use and meeting via tele- or videoconference are some real alternatives.

Switching

Onsite installation or purchase of renewable forms of energy such as solar, wind, hydro, and biomass reduces dependence on fossil fuels and can significantly reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This is perhaps the most significant way a library can reduce its GHG emissions. In the quest to be carbon-neutral, switching to more efficient energy sources would have a significant effect. It is interesting to note that if our library was situated in Tasmania, its carbon emissions from electricity usage would be reduced to approximately one fifth of their current size, because Tasmania uses hydroelectricity, and Victoria’s electricity is generated from brown coal.

Sequestration

Planting trees effectively sequesters carbon emissions in the ground. For a library, this could even mean partially allocating income streams to tree planting.

Assessing

Once any institution has gone through the process of reducing on-site emissions, it needs to look back and re-assess its original reduction objectives. If the objectives are not being met, then consideration should be given to reduction strategies that might have been missed or under-used.

Offsets

A carbon offset is any project that indirectly reduces GHG offsets at one source. The purchase of carbon offsets are last in the order of carbon management strategies because of the importance of first considering ‘at-source’ options for reducing energy use.

In recent times, libraries have responded well to change and have kept pace in a rapidly evolving technological environment. Now, when we are all being asked to adjust our thinking even further and dramatically reduce our carbon emissions for the sake of future generations, the challenge of sustainable, carbon-neutral libraries presents as both an inspiring and achievable goal.

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Sacred stacks: the higher purpose of libraries and librarianship
Nancy Kalikow Maxwell
American Library Association, 2008
ISBN: 0838909175
RRP: $38

Nancy Kalikow Maxwell is Jewish, a reference librarian, and a graduate in Catholic theology. She takes us on an inspirational journey through the sacred stacks of the library and shows us the greater purpose of libraries.

We are exposed to the notion that librarianship is a calling, serving some greater purpose. Generally speaking we consider the purpose of libraries to be in information literacy, the free flow of information, and the use of democracy; surprisingly this book brings our attention to another important function. It focuses on the library in the life of its users and how it affects users’ souls and their quality of life. The library is painted in the light of a sacred, spiritual, and heavenly place that among many other things promotes community, transmits culture to future generations, organises chaos, and uplifts society.

Even atheists will find this book compelling. Any book that compares cataloguers to God will undoubtedly gain undivided attention. However, it is important for librarians to become their own advocates to highlight their importance, in order to curb the rumours that physical libraries are no longer needed and to inspire the next generation of librarians to be born.

Les Maclean
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Lucy, the Lie Detector
Marianne Musgrove
Random House, 2010
ISBN: 9781741664553
RRP: $14.95

Part of a chapter book series that deals with some of the life questions of childhood (in the first book, Lucy the Good, Lucy tries to work out what it means to be good), Lucy the Lie Detector explores the complicated nature of lies, white lies, and leaving out bits of the truth. There’s a scratched car, a camel, an escaped guinea pig, a best friend, a worst enemy, and parents with white lies of their own! Lucy van Loon has to deal with the consequences of a fib that turns into a bigger and bigger lie when she scratches her father’s car. Will her little brother forgive her? Is staying silent the same as telling a lie out loud? Why do grownups sometimes tell lies? Why are there so many rules? This is a funny story with an engaging and feisty Australian heroine, perfect for eight years and up.

Christine Tursky
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Inspector Singh Investigates: The Singapore School of Villainy
Shamini Flint
Piatkus, 2010
ISBN: 9780749299770
RRP: $22.99

Inspector Singh Investigates: The Singapore School of Villainy, is the third book by Shamini Flint starring the rotund, politically incorrect Inspector Singh.

An expat in a leading Singaporean law firm is murdered, opening a complicated can of worms that Inspector Singh needs to wade through in order to solve. The turban wearing, wheezing, overweight, yet lovable Inspector has to contend with a nagging wife who is always right, and a Superintendent who looks upon Singh as “a disgrace to the force”. The book contains many intriguing twists and turns that leave the reader guessing and then double guessing, creating an engrossing novel.

A thoroughly enjoyable book with an ending that leaves you shocked to the core.

Karen Beasley
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Rufus the Numbat
David Miller
Ford St Publishing, 2010
ISBN: 9781876462963
RRP: $32.99

The back and inside covers of this book are beautifully illustrated depicting the habitat of the numbat. I was anticipating a book for young children that informed about this little-known, endangered Australian creature. This was barely implied in the story of Rufus passing through a country town, causing havoc on his way to the bush.

There was an opportunity missed here to inform children of a marsupial that is not nocturnal, lives naturally in only two spots in Western Australia, has teeth like pegs, eats up to 20 000 termites a day, is threatened by the introduced fox and our domestic animals and is bred in captivity to be reintroduced to the wild.

Diane Hollingsworth
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The Confessions of Catherine de Medici
C.W. Gortner
Hodder & Stoughton, 2010
ISBN: 9780340962961
RRP: $32.99

Catherine de Medici is a formidable figure in 16th century history and a rich source of material for CW Gortner’s fictional autobiography The Confessions of Catherine de Medici. Following her turbulent life as a young child growing up in Florence through to her marriage to the future king of France, and then beyond as a regent and domineering mother to 3 French kings, the novel displays her immersgence from the trap of ‘sexing up’ history, with an element of intrigue and excitement, but leaves Gortner with a lot of ground to cover.

Luckily, this means that Confessions’s 400 pages breeze past quickly, leaving virtually no lulls in the narrative. While the format of the book allows Gortner’s Catherine to rationalise her motives and actions, at times Gortner tempers Catherine’s role in these difficult situations, instead of allowing her to own the tough decisions that she is forced to make.

Gortner has obviously done his research, however Confessions falls into the trap of ‘sexing up’ history, with an unlikely love interest thrown into the narrative. It is one of a few detours from fact, all of which the author outlines in his end notes. For the most part the book offers readers an entertaining look into another powerful female political figure of the 16th century.

Megan Cuthbert
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effect, giving the stories context and humour. There’s something for everyone in the Making of Modern Australia.

Adrienne Walker
adriennew@intermode.com.net

The Splendour Falls
Rosemary Clement Moore
Random House, 2010
ISBN 9781864718672
RRP $17.95

Clement-Moore presents us with an engaging YA romantic drama set in Alabama in America’s Deep South, where history has left such a deep imprint you can still see its petticoat tails out of the corner of your eye. The protagonist Sylvie arrives from a shattered past in New York to rebuild in what for her is a foreign land, at the historic ancestral home. As she falls in with first one then another young man who hold differing but equally powerful attraction for her, romantic tension vies with mystery as the strange goings on in and around her historic ancestral home build towards a mysterious and magical conclusion.

The start is very slow, with Sylvie still at home in New York. It is a shame that the spectre of Sylvie’s shrink looms larger and more intimidating than the spectres of the past; the American middle class way of life is foreign to those not fond of commercial television in this country. I started out feeling the best parts of the book were the spaces between the words, but once the artifice is left behind for a more earthly reality, things improve immensely and the reader is drawn in to the story.

Adrienne Walker
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The Untrained Environmentalist
John Fenton
Allen & Unwin, 2010
ISBN: 9781742370194
RRP: $35.00

Fenton reminisces with ease making this a pleasurable read. I’ll certainly be giving my Dad a copy of this book for Father’s Day.

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Diane Hollingsworth
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Is Social Media a fad or the biggest shift since the industrial revolution?

We do not have a choice about whether we do social media; the question is how well we do it.

Some facts:
- Over 50% of the world's population is under 30 years old.
- 96% of them have joined a social network.
- Facebook tops Google for weekly traffic in the US. 60 million status updates happen on Facebook daily.
- If Facebook were a country, it would be the world’s 3rd largest, ahead of the United States and only behind China and India.
- 50% of the mobile internet traffic in the UK is for Facebook: people update anywhere, anytime. Imagine what that means for bad customer experiences.
- To see the revenge of the mistreated customer, look at United Breaks Guitars (it has had almost 9 million views).
- 78% of consumers trust peer recommendations, only 14% trust advertisements.
- The second largest search engine in the world is YouTube.
- Social Media has overtaken pornography as the largest activity on the web.
- Wikipedia has over 15 million articles and studies show it's more accurate than Encyclopedia Britannica. If you were paid a $1 every time an article was posted on Wikipedia you would earn $1712.32 per hour.

24 of the 25 largest newspapers are experiencing record declines in circulation.
- 80% of companies use social media for recruitment.
- There are over 200,000,000 Blogs.
- 1 out of 8 couples married in the U.S. last year met via social media.
- A 2009 US Department of Education study revealed that on average, online students out performed those receiving face-to-face instruction.

The number of years it took to reach 50 million users:
- Radio (38 Years)
- TV (13 Years)
- Internet (4 Years)
- iPod (3 Years)
- Facebook added over 200 million users in less than a year

Social Media is not a fad; it is a fundamental shift in the way we communicate. Want to find out more about Social Media? You can look at Social Media Revolution 2 on YouTube at http://socialnomics.net/2010/05/05/social-media-revolution-2-refresh/

Helen Roberts
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ALIA reviews Inter-Library Loan Voucher Scheme

ALIA's Inter-Library Loan Voucher Scheme has been in operation for approximately 30 years. The scheme is provided as a service to institutional and voucher-only members of ALIA and operates within Australia. ALIA administers the voucher scheme, managing the purchasing and redemption of vouchers.

Over the past decade, the use of ALIA vouchers has declined markedly, due in part to an increase in fee-free reciprocal borrowing networks, altered library internal accounting requirements, and alternative automated options for payment.

In 2010, ALIA's auditors have required the Association to accurately state its voucher liability. ALIA has determined that a detailed review of the voucher scheme will be necessary to meet audit requirements.

The review of the voucher scheme will comprise an extensive consultation process with voucher users and other key stakeholders across all library sectors. The ALIA Interlibrary Lending Advisory Committee (ILAC), chaired by Sharon Howells of the University of Newcastle, will be closely involved during the consultation phase. The consultation process will commence in August and conclude in late September 2010.

In addition to fulfilling audit obligations, ALIA will use feedback provided through the consultation process to prepare an options paper on the future of the voucher system for consideration by the ALIA Board at its December 2010 meeting.

Details of the consultation process will be communicated in coming weeks via ALIA and other e-lists, and the Association's website: www.alia.org.au

Rob Miller
ALIA Chief Operating Officer
rob.miller@alia.org.au

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Rob Miller
ALIA Chief Operating Officer
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If you have a social conscience and are interested in justice or sustainability, you could be an activist. Often people who are enthusiastic about sustainability or social and environmental justice get involved in advocating to colleagues and library customers and come to be seen as an activist.

For some people, being an activist is a positive thing, for others, feel that their workplace might not treat them the same if they know that they are advocating for an organisation on issues such as social justice, humanitarian issues, refugees, climate change, poverty, food security, or water management.

Often, being an activist involves being passionate and committed to your cause. Activist and advocacy groups, such as Oxfam, Animal Liberation, Amnesty International, Trees for Life, Urban Landcare, etc. are commonly run by volunteers and require people to have skills in chairing meetings, taking minutes, event management, fundraising, and lobbying. Activists are often ‘big picture thinkers’; they are community-minded, understand, and engage in the principles and practices of participatory democracy. For some activists, there is the opportunity to gain experience in writing grant applications, developing vision and mission statements, being involved in contributing to government policy, governance, and strategy documentation, and creating positive change.

Some activists or advocates are tackling some huge issues within their educational, workplace, and residential communities. Chances are high that if you spend a lot of time and energy working for your cause, you may experience burnout symptoms. Perhaps you have been questioning the purpose behind what you are doing. Maybe you’ve experienced a setback such as a new political management decision that changes your workplace landscape. How do you stop from feeling defeated? How do you overcome activist burnout? How do you sustain your commitment?

As an activist I’ve been involved with a variety of different groups, from student politics during my undergraduate degree, lobbying for recycling programs at various workplaces, through to climate change activism at a national level. During this time there have both big and small wins, but also my fair share of disappointment and obstacles. In order to sustain my motivation in advocating and lobbying on issues that are pertinent, I’ve used the following strategies.

Celebrate the small wins – often we overlook small achievements. If one person thought about the issue that you have been advocating for, then that’s a small win. We tend to get sidetracked by trying to create huge changes and secure funding for big projects. If your workplace lets you hold a morning tea and talk about the cause that you believe in, or even promote it with posters on the community notice board, then that’s an achievement worth noting.

Hold a social function, such as a picnic with a topical theme and invite other like-minded activist/advocacy groups along – This might sound like a bit of a strange idea, but it’s amazing how people connect and relax when they share food together. If you’re feeling a bit overcommitted or drained due to trying to balance work and volunteer commitments, then the chance to meet others from similar groups can do the world of good. You might discover that other people are facing the same challenges and you can workshop ideas on how to get the most and best out of each day. Alternatively, you might find out that people who are involved in other similar groups are interested in forming a coalition, so that you can share the work around and not have to continuously reinvent the wheel.

Attend a seminar or a professional development training course that is relevant to the issue that you advocate for – Meeting other people from other professions who are interested in the same cause as you can help immensely in bringing yourself back from activist burnout. The chance to hear and learn from amazing speakers might be just what you need.

Revisit what it was that enthused you in the first place (see that film again, read that book, call that friend, look at those holiday photos).

Recruit new members into your group – The beauty of volunteer-run organisations is that because you’re not paying people, you can recruit new group members whenever to the need arises. Recruitment drives for volunteer organisations are great, because you meet new people, you get to raise awareness for your issue, and hopefully you’ll end up with some new people to work with that will reinvigorate your group and bring in fresh ideas.

Choose your light – Make the next battle that you pick to fight one that you know you can win. If you’re on the brink of activist burnout, then you need to be careful that the next challenge that you engage yourself with is one that you know that you can achieve. This will not only help you with your own sense of wellbeing, but if your entire activist group is feeling a little defeated, you’ll help the group to regain some motivation and boost member morale.

Most importantly, take some time out for yourself – If you don’t have your health, what do you have? If you’re an activist or an advocate, chances are you are used to putting other people and issues before yourself. Sometimes, you need to be selfish and do something just for you.

Activists and advocates are important people; they are leaders and motivators and they help minority communities to have a voice.

Katie Hannan

Katie Hannan is a freelance librarian, an activist, a trainer, and a consultant. She may be contacted via email katie@lost.net.au
Value and usefulness

Craig Thomler is one of the most respected commentators in the field of eGov – especially Australian eGov – but occasionally I have to take issue with his pronouncements. In a post in his blog at http://tinyurl.com/2cljgcd, he looked at the value of Apps competitions; these are the events where people are invited to take government information and do something smart with it. He cited the competitions held this year by the NSW and Victorian governments that resulted in around 300 new systems, and he used a rough calculation to arrive at a figure of $6 million dollars in value. The problem as I see it is: just because someone’s done it, is it of value? Many (perhaps most) of the apps are quite trivial and would never have been developed by government agencies in any case, so should they be counted as any sort of governance savings? I’m not saying that we shouldn’t be having the competitions, but let’s not dilute their benefit with unreasonable claims.

On the other hand, he also mentions a case where a forensic examination of some Canadian government information (carried out before the current rash of 2.0 activity) led to real savings of around $3.2 billion. You can read about that one at http://tinyurl.com/2ahen9

An apt comparison

I’ve had a chance to fiddle around with an iPad in the electronics store, and I’m very impressed with the way that you can read books on it. Now you do have quite a few options about which reader to use, and Jason Perlow at ZDNet has done a pretty good review of the various apps on offer. See it at http://tinyurl.com/2vintyf. There are a couple of surprises in his assessment.

Musing on friendship

If you have half an hour to spare, and you want to find out a bit more about Social Media concepts, have a look at The Real Life Social Network v2 (http://tinyurl.com/38g6wb). The presentation comprises over 200 slides, but they’ll open your eyes to just what it is you’re being exposed to when you’re enjoying yourself on Facebook or Twitter. What I liked particularly was the analysis of ‘friends’ and how the current generation of products lumps them all into the one category – with potentially unfortunate results in some cases.

Open season on Open Government

He had over six months to consider the report of the Gov 2.0 Taskforce, but it still took the Federal Minister for Finance and Deregulation until just before the beginning of the Caretaker Period to release the Commonwealth’s Declaration of Open Government (at http://tinyurl.com/25dznk). Many of his supporters lauded this great leap forward, but there were just a few niggles who wondered what’s so open about The Filter, the Gillard/Rudd deal, and a few other not-so-open issues. Then the blog was closed for comments until after the Election, and that was that.

Rolling along

Speaking of the election, there was a fine how-do-you-do-in the rush to enrol in the few days between the calling of the election and the closing of the rolls. (Of course this avoids discussion on why people don’t get on the roll earlier – like when they turn 18 – or tell the AEC when they change their address, but let that bide.) GetUp! was active on two fronts: trying to force the hand of the AEC in helping people to submit their applications online, and initiating legal action to challenge the brevity of the period for enrolling after the election is called. They were, of course, successful in the latter case. As for the former, well it may accelerate the full provision of online registration – unless of course everyone is so relieved that the election is finally over and we can put it off until next time. No worries.

Communicating effectively

It’s always good to get in touch with another professional group. In this case, it was a bunch of Communications people at a Public Sector Marketing conference. They are of course a primary client group for people working in the web space so their general needs and attitudes were not much a novelty. It was the applications though that gave me plenty of food for thought.

There was the Department of Immigration, for instance, that’s using YouTube to get its message out – with particular emphasis on warning people against using people smugglers (http://www.youtube.com/user/notopeoplesmuggling). You might be a little dubious as to whether it’s an effective way of communicating with the appropriate group of users, but they say they’ve determined that there’s a very high level of awareness of their website among both the Australian ethnic communities and the target groups in places like Afghanistan.

Then there’s VicRoads (http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/Home/) with their series of videos on YouTube using humour to communicate road safety messages to Gen Y. In their case the message was overshadowed by the fruity language and the attitudes portrayed – and they got a lot of free publicity thanks to the attention of more conservative sections of the media. I was also interested to see that they’re busy developing iPhone apps for road users, despite one of the prime safety warnings. I see it is: just because someone’s done it, is it of value? Many (perhaps most) of the apps are quite trivial and would never have been developed by government agencies in any case, so should they be counted as any sort of governance savings? I’m not saying that we shouldn’t be having the competitions, but let’s not dilute their benefit with unreasonable claims.

How big is your market?

The VicRoads plans made me think about doing things for the iPhone and whether there were enough of them around to justify specific developments. I was a little surprised to find that current estimates are that there are well over 1.5 million iPhones, iPads, and other smartphones in Australia now. That represents over 6% of the population – and it’s growing. If you’re interested in getting your message out, it’s a market segment that you shouldn’t avoid.

Kerry Webb
kwebb@alianet.alia.org.au

Don’t forget to visit my blog
New members

Member to Associate

Cheryl Matthews QLD
Ayesha Khalid NSW
Anna Hudson WA
Eleni Prineas NSW
Lisa Preston SA
Celina Drummond QLD
Marilyn Buchholz QLD
Jia Tina DuRosalie Rigby NSW
Margaret O’Donnell NSW

Member to Technician

Deborah Williams VIC
Irish Crompton QLD
Jane Whisker NSW

New Associate

Troy Watson VIC
Adriana Felet-Pezo NSW
Marian O’Hanlon NSW
Meredith Brimich VIC
Graham Eagle QLD
Nyssa Parkes VIC
Sonny Chandra QLD
Janette San Martin VIC
Linda Justo QLD
Anne Morris Bannerman NSW
Anne Xu ACT
Helen Woodman QLD
Jane Elizabeth Little NSW
Kendra Mewett WA
Caroline Mary Yeh NSW
Gitanjali Lakhan QLD
Susan Shrub NSW
Yvonne Hawkins QLD

New Library Technician

Lyneke Mitchell VIC
Dean McDowell VIC
Jennifer Olsen WA
Marian Bennett NSW
Daniel Petrinic NSW
Bibiana Chai WA
Evadne Lewis NSW
Janell Sammon QLD
Tony Campbell QLD

New Institution

Read How You Want NSW
Aus. Prime Ministers Centre at ACT
Old Parliament House ACT
Library Innovations and Strategy VIC
Queensland Dept of Transport & Main Roads Library QLD

iGroup Asia Pacific VIC
CMIS Evaluation WA
Kardinia International College VIC
New Member

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Shannon Butler QLD
Victoria Kitanov ACT
Yasmin Paul WA
Sarah Tune SA
Tracy Glover SA
Margaret Bronwyn Bremner QLD
Linda Polosak NSW
Jane Bean WA
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Christina Dixon NSW
Maria Luzmila Vasquez NSW
Angela Gisa NSW
Catherine Scott VIC
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Marie Baring NSW
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Herman Djohan WA
Kelly Woods WA
Rita Kelada QLD
Jessica Higgins QLD
Amanda Winters VIC
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Olive Kish QLD
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Elena Batley ACT
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Fiona Jones NSW
Leanne Morton WA
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Edith Lauck WA
Behjat Mojarrahi QLD
Warda Gianatti NSW
Roger Hawcroft QLD
Janice Knopke NSW
Julie Cartwright NT
Gavin Quick VIC
Frances Brougham SA
Felix Wilson TAS

Readmitting Institution

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission ACT
Queensland Energy Resource Limited QLD
Northern Land Council NT
Department of Veterans Affairs Library ACT

Readmitting Library Technician

Joanne Comerford WA
Amada Collbert SA

Readmitting Member

Yvonne Rose NSW
Pamela McGowan NT
Grace Christian VIC

Library Technician to Associate

Rosalind Dunning WA
Gina Tom QLD
Lynette Loone NT
Susan Denton SA

National Advisory Congress Meeting

All ALIA members are invited to join us at a local National Advisory Congress meeting. This informal meeting will provide an opportunity for you to participate in discussion with an ALIA Director and your Local Liaison Officer on the 2010 NAC focus “volunteering for ALIA”


Banned Books week

26th September - 3rd October 2010

http://www.bannedbookswEEK.org
**upcoming events**

**ACT**

- **23 Sep 5:30pm. National Advisory Congress; Volunteering for ALIA.** ALIA House, 9-11 Napier Close, Deakin. Contact Robyn Ellard, ph 1800 020 072, enquiry@alia.org.au
- **20 Sep 2pm-5pm Every Member an Advocate Advocacy in Government Circles.** $0 ALIA members, $50.00 non-members. Contact Robyn Ellard, ph 1800 020 072, enquiry@alia.org.au
- **21 Sep 9:30am-12:30pm Every Member an Advocate Advocacy within larger organisations.** $0 ALIA members, $50.00 non-members. Contact Robyn Ellard, ph 1800 020 071, enquiry@alia.org.au
- **27–29 Sep Transferring and Retaining Indigenous Knowledge.** Transferring and Retaining Indigenous Knowledge conference. Contact Benjamin Hitchcock, benjamin.hitchcock@tonkincorporation.com

**NSW**

- **14 Sep 5:30pm for 6:00pm. National Advisory Congress: Volunteering for ALIA.** TAFE Ultimo, Rm G315-16, L 3, Bldg G, Thomas Street entrance, Ultimo. Contact Robyn Ellard, ph 1800 020 072, enquiry@alia.org.au
- **23 Sep 6pm - 8pm ALIA CYSS NSW Outreach Seminar Planning.** West Ryde Branch Library, 2 Graf Avenue, West Ryde 2114. Contact Alexander Mills, ph 02 6543 1913, alexm@nsw.gov.au.
- **29 Sep from 6:00pm Library Folk in the Pub – Sydney Vine Bar, upstairs in the Madison Hotel, corner of Randle and Devonshire Sts. Follow @LFIP on Twitter.** Contact Julian Sortland, ph 0429 470 672, info@lfip.info
- **11 Oct 2pm-5pm Every Member an Advocate Advocacy in Government Circles.** $0 ALIA members, $50.00 non-members. Contact Robyn Ellard, ph 1800 020 071, enquiry@alia.org.au
- **12 Oct 9:30am-12:30pm Every Member an Advocate Advocacy within larger organisations.** $0 ALIA members, $50.00 non-members. Contact Robyn Ellard, ph 1800 020 071, enquiry@alia.org.au

**NT**

- **28 Sep 5:00pm. National Advisory Congress: Volunteering for ALIA.** Darwin City Council Chambers, Room 1. Contact Robyn Ellard, ph 1800 020 072, enquiry@alia.org.au

**QLD**

- **28 Sep 5:30pm. National Advisory Congress: Volunteering for ALIA.** QUT room V714 (library building). Contact Robyn Ellard, ph 1800 020 072, enquiry@alia.org.au
- **27 Sep–1 Oct SLAQ/IASL Librarianship conference Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia.** Contact Karen Bonanno, kbonanno@bigpond.net.au

**SA**

- **14 Sep 5.45pm for 6.15pm. National Advisory Congress: Volunteering for ALIA.** University of Adelaide Library, Ira Raymond Room. Contact Robyn Ellard, ph 1800 020 072, enquiry@alia.org.au
- **13 Sep–29 Oct University of Sheffield FOLIOz and ALIA Training PD Course Evidence-Based Library and Information Practice: Delivering Services That Shine! (EBLIP-Gloss) This online course aims to equip information professionals with a working knowledge of evidence-based library and information practice. For more information, contact the ALIA PD Team, ph 02 6215 8222, pd@alia.org.au

**TAS**

- **22 Sep 5:30pm National Advisory Congress: Volunteering for ALIA.** University of Tasmania, Morris Miller Library, Meeting room 1.1.
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http://www.liaza.org.nz

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