TOP SECRET!

TREASURES AND SECRETS

If public libraries didn’t exist...

Treasures: our collections, our libraries, our people

Pssst! Some secrets should be shared
INCITE is the news magazine of the Australian Library and Information Association. It presents perspectives on issues relating to library and information science.

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Many of the National Library of Australia’s greatest treasures, from James Cook’s Endeavour Journal to a letter written by Jane Austen, are now on permanent display with the recent opening of the new purpose-built gallery. The treasures on display include James Cook’s Endeavour Journal, the original manuscript of Waltzing Matilda, Australia’s earliest existing printed document (a 1796 theatre playbill), Azaria Chamberlain’s hospital identity bracelet and Patrick White’s notebooks—and his glasses.
"If libraries cease to exist, we will have to re-invent them."
- Richard Watson, toptrends.nowandnext.com (page 3)
Busy new year ahead

I’d like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Sue Hutley, who will be leaving ALIA at the end of the year after six years of service as Executive Director.

During her time as Executive Director Sue has built excellent relationships with the Federal government, other library associations, members and the profession at large. Through her work ALIA has been at the table for discussions regarding the National Broadband Network, internet filtering and school libraries to name just a few issues of key concern to our members and our profession. Her lobbying and advocacy on behalf of the profession has been instrumental in securing funding for significant national projects such as The Library Initiative and National Year of Reading 2012 and there are other opportunities still in active discussion.

Working with a management (the ALIA President and Board of Directors) which changes every 12 months would be challenging for anyone. Sue has managed this with good grace, a professional manner and importantly, a sense of humour.

Many of you will know Sue personally and I hope you will join with me in wishing her all the best in her new role with Queensland State Archives.

The Board has now commenced the important process of recruiting a new Executive Director to lead the Association. Some members have expressed to me their concern that our professional voice and values remain a primary focus within the leadership of the Association and the importance of this is acknowledged by the Board. Whilst the recruitment is underway, Rob Miller will be Acting Executive Director and the Board will work closely with him and the ALIA National Office team to ensure services to members continue smoothly and that our strategic outcomes remain a key focus.

By the time this INCITE goes to press, the National Advisory Congress for 2011 will be completed. This year’s discussion topic of the future of the profession has prompted some interesting and lively discussion.

I have had the opportunity to be personally present at three different meetings and the energy and enthusiasm for our profession continues to be strong. Whilst all recognise there are challenges ahead, there is support for ongoing evolution of what we do, of our knowledge and skills to meet the changing role of libraries and the expectations of our clients.

The final report of the 2011 National Advisory Congress will be available on the website and the Board will use this in our planning for 2012 and beyond.

In November I was privileged to attend the Library and Information Association of New Zealand Conference in Wellington. The program included a number of excellent presentations from our colleagues ‘across the ditch.’ International speakers from the US and the UK particularly focused on advocacy initiatives in the light of the significant funding reductions to libraries and the resultant closures. Of particular interest was a seminar and discussion that has paralleled our own National Advisory Congress topic. The issues raised during the discussion also paralleled our own and ALIA will share the outcomes of our own discussions with LIANZA as we have a great deal in common.

Finally, as the year draws to a close, I’d like to wish everyone a relaxing and safe holiday season and best wishes as we look forward to a busy 2012.

Margaret Allen
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Civil rights records go digital

ProQuest has teamed up with the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP) to digitise the association’s archives in a move that will make one of the most famous records of the American civil rights movement available to researchers internationally. Nearly two million pages of internal and legal records, revealing a firsthand view into issues including desegregation, criminal justice and discrimination will be included. Currently on microfilm, this resource is the most heavily used collection in the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress.

French National Librarian to chair the Europeana Foundation

The Chief Executive of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Bruno Racine, has been elected to chair the Board of the Europeana Foundation, responsible for the EU’s primary cultural heritage showcase, Europeana.eu, which currently includes some 20 million cultural artefacts. The European Commission has just announced proposals for structural funding for the resource through to 2020.
Thank you and au revoir

It has been a full six years for me as ALIA Executive Director, a position which I have always seen as a privilege, a challenge, and a unique role within the industry. As you read this, I am packing my boxes and bags to return to my home state of Queensland and a new role that, happily, still means I will be active in this much-loved profession. Such endings and beginnings always give pause for thought.

One of the many things I am pleased to look back on is the forming of the TAFE and Special Libraries Advisory Committees and the strengthening of the Public Libraries Advisory Committee. These committees are continuing to produce tangible results for the benefit of all ALIA members, not just in their particular sectors. It is this bringing together of key groups and individuals that builds on our profession’s natural networking mindset and which also gives us hope for a sustainable future.

The progress we have made with the once-in-a-lifetime House of Representatives Inquiry into School Libraries and Teacher Librarians and our work with the Australian School Library Association has also been significant. Our collaborations with the Council of Australian University Librarians on the leadership of issues such as copyright and access to information are proving beneficial too, along with closer relationships with educators and researchers in library science.

We can, as an Association, also be proud of the Library Initiative project with the Federal Department of Families, Housing Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. This project has put in place a fruitful relationship with the Federal Government to improve access to the collections of libraries across Australia. Projects such as this have helped substantially to put libraries and information services directly in front of those most able to make or change the policies and funding structures that directly affect us all.

As you read this, the commencement of the National Year of Reading 2012 is but a few short weeks away – although there’s already much activity and some projects are well-advanced. As you will read in these pages, over 800 libraries have registered to be part of it, dozens of high profile ambassadors have joined the team and the whole program is in the good hands of the Founding Partners, National Office co-ordination and the National Year of Reading team.

Along with raising the profile of the profession and the Association with external organisations and agencies, ALIA’s program of advocacy can deliver long term benefits through the relationships we nurture in delivering on such projects as these. To capitalise on the advocacy activities we have already undertaken however, the Association needs to be strong financially to be able to put resources (both in terms of funding and staffing) into this work.

ALIA is a broad organisation with so many elements, topics, committees and issues. Our membership is also broad in opinions, expertise and perspectives. We are an organisation that, to serve our profession, must also survive as a business enterprise. And we really do need to work better together as a profession and as a sector (or whatever you want to call the library industry) to achieve our greater goals. Which leads me to membership – and the fact is that it remains static. It is a simple fact that, to deliver continuous improvement in services and professional advocacy, membership fees are crucial. To do what members tell us ALIA “should” be doing, many more of the 27,000 employees in the library and information services sector need to be active members of this, the peak body of our profession. ALIA remains the national association with the runs on the board in successfully seeking out and securing millions of dollars in funding for projects across the sector. If you are not a financial member, your voice may not be heard. If you are a financial member, remember your advocacy role includes reaching out to colleagues who have opinions about what ALIA “should” be doing and encouraging them to be part of making it happen.

As I wrap up my time as ED, I must thank a lot of people. I have enjoyed greatly working with our key volunteers – Advisory Committee Chairs, Group Convenors and Conference Committees. While there is always the serious work of the Association to consider, we have also shared the dance floor and drinks at the bar over the years. I have made many friends and have many valued memories of shared successes and good times.

Thanks must go too, to the Board members during my time as ED, who share with me the (at times) tough decisions required and put their hearts into the necessary responsibilities and requirement for leadership the role demands. Thanks especially to the Presidents for their time, sage advice and support. To the good friends I have made, and close colleagues – my thanks for your personal support and encouragement as well.

Finally, a special and sincere thank you to all the staff I have worked with – National Office staff, State Managers and our project officers for your support and hard work. And happy Christmas time to all.

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NOTE: Rob Miller, ALIA Chief Operating Officer, will be Acting Executive Director from 2nd January 2012 until the next Executive Director commences work. Correspondence and enquiries should be directed to executive.director@alia.org.au.

Looking for ALIA Snapshot? It’s on page 24
THE VISION

• Australia, a nation of readers
• A universal appreciation of the benefits of reading for pleasure
• A reading culture in every home

Barefoot Investor believes in books

Investment guru Scott Pape is an ambassador for the National Year of Reading. Dubbed Australia’s favourite money man, Scott delivers understandable and achievable financial advice in plain speaking to an audience of around 12 million people via his television show and website (www.barefootiinvestor.com). He’s a great believer in getting to grips with our finances and in the power of literacy to transform lives - including his own.

Throughout my entire school career, I can’t remember reading anything meatier than a menu.

Yet that changed years ago when a wise bloke told me that in 20 years time I’d be the same person I am now “except for the books you read and the people you meet”. I took him at his word. In the dozen or so years since school, I’ve read a book every couple of days (then again, I am making up for lost time).

I know that I’m a different person because of the books that I’ve read, but more importantly, I continue to broaden my awareness, understanding and knowledge of life a little each day. And that’s why I’m proud to be an ambassador of National Year of Reading 2012.”

-Scott Pape

‘It’s never too late ... to learn to read’ was a short story competition for unpublished, new, emerging and established Australian writers. The National Year of Reading 2012, in partnership with ALIA and Writing Australia, supported by the NT Writers Centre, Queensland Writers Centre and writingWA, was given a grant by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), to run the competition as part of Adult Learners’ Week 2011 (ALW).

The aim was to create exciting, inspiring and challenging stories to support and encourage adult learning, and to highlight the fact that “it’s never too late ... to learn to read”.

Internationally, ALW celebrates the value and diversity of life-long learning. In Australia, the main focus of ALW has been to recognise achievements and raise awareness
WHAT’S OUR STORY?

With over 800 libraries (and counting) registered for the National Year of Reading 2012, excitement is building. The National Year of Reading will formally launch on February 14 next year right around Australia – and what better way to celebrate Library Lovers Day than get involved and kickstart your own year of reading?

But you don’t need to wait. The National Year of Reading program is already underway with the Our Story project – a search for eight books that together paint a picture of the Australian people and the land we live in. This is your chance to vote for the book that will go forward to represent your state or territory and become part of the official National Year of Reading Collection.

You will find the books nominated for each state and territory on the website at www.love2read.org.au/our-story.cfm. Treat yourself to a good read and then vote for your choice – it’s that simple.

The ABC has partnered the National Year of Reading for this project and voting is on their website at www.abc.net.au/arts/yearofreading/. Or you can drop into your local library or bookshop and fill in a voting slip. (Want to be in on the action in your library? There’s still time to register to be part of it all at www.love2read.org.au/registration.cfm.) Voting closes on January 6, 2012 and the eight winning books will be announced at the National Year of Reading launch at the National Library of Australia on February 14th.

The National Year of Reading Collection will include books that tell the stories of the Indigenous people and capture the cultures and traditions of more recent arrivals, take the reader on a journey from the coast, through the great tracts of grazing land to the arid red centre and a book that someone in Broome can relate to as closely as someone in Adelaide.

You can comment on the books and check out the latest news on our Facebook page too. And you can also become involved in the National Year of Reading by joining the National Year of Reading Book Club at TheReadingRoom.com. Help other club members discover great Australian novels, discuss your favourite books and meet like-minded readers.

What a great start to your summer holiday reading plans!

Winning stories from published writers

Refuting the White Rabbit by Maria Arena
Letters and Lufstories by Matt Blackwood
Letters by Sophie Constable
The Beauline by Jane Downing
I is for You by Tom Dumlemond-
Happy New Year by Penny Gibson
A Written History by Amy Jackson-Shelling
Camels in Morocco by Melanie Joosten
Roadhouse by Jennifer Mills

Winning stories from new, unpublished writers

A Reason for Reading by Kirralee Baldock
When English Made My Future Better
The Sleeping Beauty by Cassandra Dickerson
For Lucy by Karen Eastwood
Grandad’s Garden by Kath Harper
The War Gift by Vanessa Jones
My Neighbour’s Screen Door by Mark Joseph
Strangers in Fiction by Kerri Turner
The Tin of Secrets by Steve Wilson

Highly commended stories

Written on My Heart by Juliet Blair
A Bridge Between Two Worlds by Astrid Cooper-
God Shopping by Robert Hollingworth
The Books by Tania McCartney
One Better Life by Mike Murphy
Rocky Road by Jackie Tritt

All of these stories are available as free downloads from www.love2read.org.au/never-too-late.cfm. The stories are also available as podcasts to enable non-readers to enjoy them online from the National Year of Reading website.

Congratulations to all the winners.
PUBLIC LIBRARIES: IF WE DIDN’T HAVE THEM ALREADY, WE WOULD HAVE TO INVENT THEM

Do you ever wonder what non-library folk really think of libraries? Once upon a time London-based writer, speaker and scenario planning consultant Richard Watson decided to create an extinction timeline, plotting the potential disappearance of many familiar creations. Amongst them was the public library.

There was a report in a newspaper a while ago about a mother whose six-year-old had asked her whether he should put a slice of bread in the toaster “landscape or portrait?” I mentioned this to my ten-year-old son and he said “he should have Googled it.”

I mention this because I am interested in how spaces and places change how we think. In particular I am interested in how new digital objects and environments are starting to change age-old attitudes and behaviours, including how we relate to one another.

And this directly leads me to a very particular place, namely public libraries and the question of whether or not they have a future. In short, what is the role – or value - of public libraries and public librarians in an age of e-Books and Google?

Now at this point I have to put my hand up and admit to being wrong. Some time ago I created an extinction timeline, because I believe that the future is as much about things we’re familiar with as disappearing as it is about new things being invented. And, of course, I put libraries on the extinction timeline because, in an age of e-books and Google, who needs them?

Big mistake. Especially when one day you make a presentation to a room full of librarians and show them the extinction timeline. I got roughly the same reaction as I got from a Belgian after he noticed that I’d put his country down as expired by 2025.

Fortunately most librarians have a sense of humour, as well as keen eyesight, so I ended up developing some scenarios for the future of public libraries and I now repent. I got it totally wrong. Probably.

Whether or not we will want libraries in the future I cannot say, but I can categorically state we will need them, because libraries aren’t just about the books they contain. Moreover, it is a big mistake, in my view, to confuse the future of books or publishing with the future of public libraries. They are not the same thing.

Let’s start by considering what a public library is for. Traditionally the answer would have been a place to borrow books. This is where the argument that libraries are now dying, or will soon be dead, originates. After all, if you can download any book in 60 seconds, buy cheap books from a supermarket or instantly search for any fact, image or utterance on Google why bother with a dusty local library?

I’d say the answer to this is that public libraries are important because of a word that’s been largely ignored or forgotten and that word is ‘public’. Public libraries are about more than mere facts, information or ‘content’. Public libraries are places where local people and ideas come together. They are spaces, local gathering places, where people exchange knowledge, wisdom, insight and, most importantly of all, human dignity.

A good local library is not just about borrowing books or storing physical artefacts. It is where individuals become card-carrying members of a local community. They are places where people give as well as receive.

Libraries are keystones delivering the building blocks of social cohesion, especially for the very young and the very old. They are where individuals come to sit quietly and think, free from the distractions of our digital age. They are where people come to ask for help in finding things, especially themselves. And the fact that they largely do this for nothing is nothing short of a miracle.

It is interesting to me that so much is made of the fact that most things on the internet are free. Indeed whole books have been written on the subject of this radical new price. But the idea of free information is nothing new and when free public libraries were invented the idea was even more radical because of the high cost of books.

Of course, there is the argument that virtualisation means that we will no longer need public libraries – or that if they continue to exist their services will be tailored to the individual and they will be capable of instantly sending whatever it is that we, as individuals, want direct to the digital device of our choosing. And perhaps some libraries will do this for a fee rather than for free.

Costly mistake. This would be a huge error in my view, partly because what people want is not always the same as what they need and partly because this focuses purely on the information at the expense of overall learning and experience.

Some people have argued that content is now king and that the vessel that houses information is irrelevant. I disagree. I believe that how information is delivered influences the message and is, in some instances, more meaningful than the message.

As I’ve already said, libraries are about people, not just books, and librarians are about more than just saying “shhh”. They are also about saying “psst – have a look at this”. They are sifters, guides and co-creators of human connection. Most of all they are cultural curators, not of paper, but of human history and ideas.

In a world cluttered with too much instant opinion we need good librarians more than ever. Not just to find a popular book, but to recommend an obscure or original one.

Each month, OPINION features contributions from invited guest writers. The opinions expressed in this column do not necessarily reflect those of the Australian Library and Information Association.
Not only to find events but to invent them. The internet can do this too, of course, but it can’t look you in the eye and smile gently whilst it does it.

And in a world that’s becoming faster, noisier, more virtual and more connected, I think we need the slowness, quietness, physical presence and disconnection that libraries provide, even if all we end up doing in one is using a free computer.

Public libraries are about access and equality. They are open to all and do not judge a book by its cover any more than they judge a reader’s worth by the clothes they wear. They are one of the few free public spaces that we have left and they are among the most valuable, sometimes because of the things they contain, but more usually because of what they don’t.

Of course, we could put a Starbucks into every library – and we could allow mobile phone use and piped music throughout too – but then surely what we will be left with are more global outposts of Starbucks not local libraries.

What libraries do contain, and should continue to contain in my view, includes mother and toddler reading groups, computer classes for seniors, language lessons for recently arrived immigrants, family history workshops and shelter for the homeless and the abused. Equally, libraries should continue to work alongside local schools, local prisons and local hospitals and provide access to a wide range of e-services, especially for people with mental or physical disabilities.

In short, if libraries cease to exist, we will have to re-invent them.

Now, admittedly many younger people still see no need to visit a library. Many, if not most, will not have done so in years. But this could be because they still see libraries as spaces full of old books rather than places full of new ideas.

But this may change. In my view it is inevitable that the ongoing digitalisation of culture will lead to an ever-greater integration of cultural institutions and public libraries will shift from being book places to places that curate our cultural and intellectual heritage. Libraries will thus become memory institutions like art galleries and museums. Indeed, why not physically combine all three?

This, of course, means that the role of librarians will change. The idea of professional librarianship will fade and in its place will emerge the idea of professional informational and cultural curators and this will embrace a variety of different skills.

But let’s bring it back to why the physical space that libraries occupy is so important. Again, libraries are not important because they contain books per se. They are, in my view, important because of how a place full of books makes people feel. Great libraries, like all great buildings, change how you feel and this, in turn, changes how you think.

So what’s my idea here? Two thoughts. The first is that we should accept that a library without books would still be a library because it would continue to be an important community resource – a neutral public space – where serendipitous encounters with people and ideas take place. This, surely, is an idea worth spreading.

My second idea is that we should consider funding libraries in new and novel ways. This could mean libraries going back to their philanthropic roots and asking wealthy individuals to buy or build libraries rather than football clubs or art galleries.

Or it could mean getting governments to impose taxes on certain leisure pursuits that are known to provide no mental nourishment or social cohesion and use the revenue generated to subsidise other, more useful things like public libraries or good books.

There is a considerable amount of discussion at the moment about obesity, about the idea that we should watch what we eat or we will end up prematurely dead. But where is the debate about the quality of what and where we read or write? Surely what we put inside our heads – where we create or consume information – is just as important as what we put inside our mouths.

Richard Watson

Richard blogs his thoughts at toptrends.nowandnext.com/about/. Our thanks to Richard for permission to reproduce this material in INCITE.
Doreen Sullivan says keeping secrets, and the art of revealing them at the right time, is a great tool for professional development. The US World War I slogan “loose lips sink ships” warned people of the danger of giving inadvertent information to enemies, perhaps in everyday conversation. The phrase was part of an overall campaign that stated “careless talk costs lives”.

The mores of the world have moved on since then and people are often drowning in information. Careless talk abounds. Lives might not be lost, but sometimes jobs and careers could be, and reputations might be ruined.

Both inadvertent and deliberate information and misinformation is often posted on social media. Cases exist where LinkedIn participants, for example, submit in-confidence material to their personal profiles and get fired soon after for breach of contract. Unless LinkedIn participants lock down their settings, the automatic broadcasting of updates of groups joined and people connected with can also indicate the person is about to make an employment move. As ever, we all need to factor in the potential consequences of our communications, especially given the ease with which they can spread beyond our original confidantes just because the technology makes it happen. Then there is the more obvious and very necessary secret-keeping, of information such as records of borrowers, and not inadvertently broadcasting the personal employee details of an entire workplace.

There is, however, a flipside of the lure of keeping secrets: revealing them. That is, revealing them at the right time. Half the joy of a secret is to be first with the news when information is no longer hidden but on its way to common knowledge. A sweet spot exists between concealment and revealment: working mystery for professional advantage. That’s when secrets become a professional development strategy.

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Our contributors this month have approached the theme from a variety of perspectives. From the professional advantages of keeping a secret or two, to sharing some hints on what to do when you are confronted with an unusual and fragile artefact for your collection and on to proudly displaying some of our most valued treasures, we’re delving deep and travelling far this month.

As it’s also the last issue for 2012, here’s a thought to take to the Christmas party – people are treasures too. If you need proof, flick back a few pages and re-read what Richard Watson has to say about public librarians.
After studying and working in education and a variety of schools, Kristy Moody embarked on a decision to enhance her career and embrace her real passion for literacy and learning. Now she’s an advocate for what she believes is one of the best kept secrets around – the value of the school library.

It was while I was doing a day of casual relief teaching in a primary school library that the light bulb flashed and I decided that I wanted to follow that dream I’d had of becoming a teacher librarian, the one that took me back to my primary school days when rewarding things like author visits, writers’ camps and exciting reading experiences were guided by the teacher librarian.

When I revisited that school a few months later for a day of relief in a classroom, I found the library dark and its doors locked. After speaking to a teacher at the school, I realised the library was a victim of neglect. Days that followed of relief work in schools using their libraries for storage space - or not at all – might have emphasised the importance of classroom libraries but also stirred a little unease for my future in a position that I was told was as rare as a dinosaur fossil).

But I did find hope. In the comfort of the State Library of Victoria, I cradled a fantastic book of a collection of case studies on examples of the school libraries of my dreams. The book is *Global Perspectives on School Libraries: Case Studies and Projects*, edited by Marquardt and Oberg and published earlier this year by IFLA. It features the literacy visions of schools and teachers being put into practice through school libraries around the world.

There I read about a school library that identified student needs and, as one measure to meet these, multiple copies of popular texts were purchased so that students would have more access to the literature they wanted to read. Though a well-resourced collection does not necessarily result in reading, it certainly encourages it.

Some of the most important things an education provides, such as access and critical thinking, can be supported by a collaborative relationship between the librarian and the rest of the school and, arguably, the most important factor is the educational value those in leadership place on the school library. Reading the Close Your Eyes and Dream article by Steve O’Connor (INCITE September 2011), I realised this is one of the biggest challenges libraries face for the future. Even school libraries with the best resources may face challenges as teacher librarians are forced to spend more time out of the library, for example. The recent Senate inquiry into school libraries and teacher librarians in Australian schools has given some focus to these issues. Schools do not exist outside of community; they are a crucial link. My experience working in them has shown me few kids like to miss out but the actual effect of disregarding the library and its vital connections results in just that. Some school libraries are the best kept secret of their school and it’s time the light bulb flashed to light up all the school libraries and the educational possibilities that they offer.

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The Fryer Library at the University of Queensland is home to a collection of profound importance to scholars of Australian studies. Its significant holdings embrace Australiana, rare books, literary and political papers and a rich Queensland architectural archive. Now some of these treasures have been gathered together in a limited edition work to mark the centenary of the University of Queensland.

Found in Fryer: Stories from the Fryer Library Collection presents 100 items selected to illustrate the rich diversity of the Fryer collection. The book also includes contributions from some notable Australians, among them Peter Beattie, Nick Earls, Tom Keneally, Frank Moorhouse, Janette Turner Hospital and Judy Watson.

The story of the Fryer collection and its rise to prominence as a research resource began with the remarkable Hayes Collection, acquired in 1967. This vast collection contained such gems as a first edition copy of Mathew Flinders’ Voyage to Terra Australis and all 12 volumes of Gregory Mathews’ extremely rare and valuable Birds of Australia.

The Hayes Collection has provided the source material for much outstanding research in Australian studies and will do so for many years to come. Building upon Father Hayes’ legacy, Fryer has continued to attract literary and historical treasures.

The presence of significant Australian literary manuscripts in the Hayes Collection provided the stimulus for further collecting of personal papers and manuscripts of Australian writers. Acquisitions during the 1970s included papers of Ernestine Hill, George Essex Evans, John Blight, Martin Boyd and the Beckett family, Michael Dransfield, Rodney Hall, Gwen Harwood, PR Stephensen, and Tom Shapcott. In 1979 the papers of Xavier Herbert were transferred to the Fryer Library. In the following decades, significant collections of material from prominent authors such as Peter Carey, David Malouf, Thea Astley, Frank Moorhouse, Olga Masters, Oodgeroo Noonuccal, and poet Bruce Dawe were also acquired.

The Hanger Collection of Australian Playscripts was originally assembled by Eunice Hanger, lecturer in Australian drama at the University of Queensland. It was a vital resource for her teaching in the 1960s when little Australian drama was formally published. The collection, which is still growing, includes scripts from well-known Australian playwrights.

Fryer continues to build on its literary origins while extending its collections into new areas such as popular fiction, women’s studies and the records of refugee activists.

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Sometimes the treasured items in a library aren’t the books. At Hills Shire Library Service in Sydney, eReaders became so popular the library decided to make them available for loan.

The Hills Shire Library Service strives to provide customers with access to innovative technologies. Our mission statement presents a strong vision for the library service of “active, safe and culturally rich people enjoying community life”. In keeping with this vision, the rise of eBooks as a popular format was one that simply couldn’t be ignored. As eBook awareness in the community grew, customer feedback identified a need to introduce an online eBook and audiobook library across library services in the Sydney Hills.

At first it was unclear how customers would react to eReaders in the library. To gauge interest, five eReaders were displayed at each library along with information about the Digital Download Library. The demand to borrow the eReaders soon grew to such an extent it became apparent that they should be made available for loan. A further ten eReaders were made available for loan as part of kits which included an eReader, simple instructions and information about the Digital Download Library. All 15 went out on loan in the first week and many reserves were placed by eager customers.

Since the introduction of the eReaders demand has been astounding with little promotion needed. To allow for a high turnover rate, there is no option to renew after the seven day loan period.

To further promote the Digital Download Library and assist customers, three digital downloads information sessions were held, proving to be very popular with customers. Feedback from each session was positive with all attendees appreciative of the opportunity to access new formats. One customer was so enthused after a session that she emailed the library to say she had been inspired to purchase her own eReader. Customers have requested more sessions as they appreciate the opportunity to ask one-on-one questions about downloading books. More sessions are being planned to be presented on a regular basis.

Surveys are included in every kit. So far feedback has been mixed. As most customers are using the technology for the first time, some said they needed more practice and had struggled to get the hang of it but appreciated the opportunity to try it out. Most respondents downloaded a book from the Digital Download Library and some have said they were encouraged to buy their own eReader.

As our service is an early adopter there were few models of eReaders available for us to trial but we recommend other libraries is to trial as many models and brands as possible before purchasing eReaders for collections. It will be interesting to see if demand levels remain the same or drop as customers purchase their own models.

Overall, having a proactive approach to eReaders and eBooks as a valid lending format has enabled our customers to access material to which they might not previously have had access. In addition, the library is seen to be an innovative and integral part of the community and, by taking this initiative, our staff have had the chance to embrace the format and promote the opportunities it provides.

Erica Wort
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Erica and Emma Craig with one of the eReaders that are now so popular
COLLECTION HELPS DESIGNERS TRAVEL THROUGH TIME

It is terrific to see students getting really excited. At Swinburne University Library, it happens a lot when they get their hands on the treasures in an extraordinary Australian history and design collection. Students have said it’s like having your own Tardis (time machine) and being transported into other eras.

Hidden away on the second floor of Swinburne University Library in Prahran is one of Melbourne’s best-kept secrets, the Swinburne Design Special Collection. The collection houses full historical runs of magazines such as Australian Women’s Weekly, Art in Australia, Pix, Architectural Digest, The Lone Hand, Art in Australia, The Australian Home Beautiful, Architecture and Arts and much more.

Built up over many years, it provides a valuable source of magazines and publications of design significance. Both staff and students of Swinburne’s Faculty of Design use these primary resources for research into the history of design in Australia.

Dr Denise Whitehouse, Senior Lecturer in Design History requires all her students to use the collection during their course work. She describes the collection as a primary source on the development of Australian art, architecture and design, particularly graphic, interior and industrial design. The collection also includes materials on the nature of Australian society and its influence on these developments.

Although the collection contains scarce material, it is important to both the faculty and the library that the collection remains a hands-on, accessible working collection as it gives students a unique opportunity to use primary resources.

Dr Simon Jackson, also from the Faculty of Design, used the collection extensively in his research into the Scandinavian influence in Australian furniture design. He was able to access a rare series of publications held in the collection recording a series of Scandinavian design exhibitions brought to Australia between 1962 and 1976. These exhibitions captured the inspiration for many local Australian designers to explore what he says was the first taste to emerge as an alternative to the dominance of British and American style and design practice in this country.

Faculty Design Liaison Librarian Gordon Turnbull has been pivotal in building the collection and his knowledge has proved invaluable to those using the collection. He worked closely with Dr Jackson and also with Nanette Carter who curated the Savage Luxury exhibition at Heide Museum of Modern Art, which included items loaned from our collection. Nanette is again using the collection, this time focusing on Australian Home Beautiful and other magazines in her research into Australia’s post war “do-it-yourself” culture.

We are fortunate to be able to make these treasures available to our students and staff.

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Kim Tairi Information Services Manager, Prahran, Swinburne University ktairi@swin.edu.au
PRESERVATION 101

As we library professionals well know, our collections range far wider than the written word in its myriad forms. From Patrick White’s specs in the National Library to the earliest known existing Australian photograph at the State Library of New South Wales, or that quilt donated by the local Guild, our colleagues are very proud of this enormously varied range of items. But it does beg a question for those of us who don’t already have such specialised collections and the expertise to care for them – what should we know before we take on the responsibility of an unusual item?

Most of our libraries are generally meant to attract as high a level of use as we can manage. The lighting and temperature levels are, for the most part, geared to patron and staff comfort. That means a well-meaning donation of a fragile artefact to the local public library can be problematic for both the artefact and the library, unless there is capacity to dedicate an area to the rather different requirements of the items themselves.

According to Kay Soderlund at Preservation Australia, we should start as we mean to continue, which means breaking out the gloves immediately (and we mean nitrile or sterile medical gloves, not cotton or latex, because with cotton you lose too much ‘touch’ and some people are allergic to latex).

“Careless handling is one of the most common causes of damage,” says Kay.

“A lot of the damage conservators see comes from poor handling, such as the use of inappropriate adhesives, sticky tape, pins and so on, or poor support for display,” she says.

Naturally most of us will already be watching out for pests and mould and we do our best to control dust in our collections, but high light levels and very high, low or rapidly fluctuating humidity are factors that will also affect a fragile item, whether a book, textile or artwork. Recent design trends happily make the most of as much natural light as can be mustered, but that same direct light is an enemy of textiles and artworks. Regardless of whether such items are in your collection or part of your decor, it’s important to make sure they are protected to ensure they can be enjoyed for a long time to come.

A key consideration for a library or collection that does not already have similar items is whether an offered item should even be accepted. There are both practical and collection-management questions that need to be asked. To avoid disasters the rule seems to be to approach with caution – and if you aren’t sure what you are looking at, get an expert in at an early stage. This will be normal operational procedure for many special collection managers but the rest of us will need some help.

“Seek professional advice before you do anything that impacts on the object,” Kay says.

Sometimes an artefact comes with tenants, in the form of a pest infestation. Not only does this have to be dealt with, there can be a risk to the rest of your collection as well. The infestation may not be visible or recognisable other than by an expert so beware the old shoebox full of treasures – keep it well away from anything else until it can be thoroughly checked.

Some donations, Kay also warns, come with other strings attached.

“It is wise to ask if there is an expectation that by donating the item, the library is agreeing to fully conserve it,” Kay advises. If it is damaged or rare (or both) this could mean a significant expense.

Consider too, how it will be stored, where and in what. Specialist materials including acid-free paper, boxes and sleeves are all going to add to the cost, as will insurance for very rare and valuable pieces. Photographs require colder, drier storage conditions than books, for example, while textiles require padding to avoid sharp creases while stored. Once in the collection, Kay says we should also ask ourselves whether it is going to be practical and easy to access when required. Some donors also expect items to be regularly exhibited and this must be budgeted and scheduled as well.

There are definitely situations and donations that probably should be avoided unless you have the environment, expertise and funding to manage them. But sometimes we will be the custodians. It’s a special privilege to have. As Kay says, “each object is individual and has its own story to tell.”

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FIVE HINTS TO KEEP YOUR TREASURE IN TIP TOP CONDITION

1. Store the item in archival quality materials and boxes to maximise protection from dust, pests and fluctuations in humidity.
2. Ensure the storage environment is stable. This doesn’t necessarily mean air conditioning is required – it’s all about stable temperature and relative humidity levels.
3. Understand the principles of appropriate handling and display for the artefact.
4. Do a Preservations Needs Assessment. Engaging a conservator to do this can help you decide the most effective and efficient use of resources for your needs – and they can also provide information to help you lobby for funding.
5. Have a comprehensive Disaster Plan and make sure all your staff know what’s in it and what to do in the event of an emergency.
ONE TREASURE HOUSING MANY MORE

Diane Horrigan counts antique birthing chairs and a 16th century anatomical atlas amongst the items in her care and the building housing these wonders as a treasure.

The Frank Forster Library at The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG) is located in East Melbourne, Victoria. The buildings of East Melbourne are a mixture of grand houses of the gold rush era and workmen’s cottages. Bluestone cobbled laneways and cast ironwork are well known architectural features of this area. College House consists of two buildings which have had extensive interior renovations and extensions to accommodate the growing organization of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG), including the library.

The library forms part of an extension wing that was added to the rear of College House in 1988. Lined in jarrah wood, it features matching jarrah furniture designed by a local Victorian cabinet maker who specializes in antique restoration. The furniture includes a library ladder, which is used to reach the top shelves of the library (fear of heights is not an option with this job).

The original library of the College was established in 1954 with donations of 20 rare antiquarian books from the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists in London. Then Dr Frank Forster, a Victorian obstetrician who had a lifelong passion for collecting in medical history, offered his extensive private collection of books, journals, pamphlets, instruments, personal papers and prints to the College in 1987. Dr Forster was very active in the area of history of medicine and was well known as a medical historian in Australia and overseas. After he passed away in 1995, the library was officially named the Frank Forster Library in his memory.

The Frank Forster Library is an historical library with collection strengths in the fields of obstetrics, gynaecology, women’s health, sex education, infant welfare and birth control. The library includes both a general collection and a rare book collection holding works from Australia, New Zealand and overseas. The rare book collection, housed with the College Archives in a special temperature-controlled room, contains many rare antiquarian books, the oldest being a 16th century pre-Vesalian anatomical atlas by Charles Estienne, considered to be one of the finest anatomical works of that time.

As well as rare books and contemporary histories, the library also holds a large collection of ephemeral materials. The strength of this area of the collection is its historical data, including statistics on maternal and newborn mortality, maternal and infant welfare information dating back to the early 1920s.

’Flap books’ - or what we now know as ‘pop-up books’ - are amongst the most popular items in the collection. The Obstetric Tables published in 1837 by George Spratt is one example, having illustrations with lift-up sections or flaps. The library forms part of the Historical Collections section, which includes the Museum, Archives and College Collection of Decorative Arts, whose collections are important in their own right. Paintings, sculptures, antique birthing chairs, obstetric and gynaecological instruments and operating tables are displayed around College House, with smaller displays housed in glass cases. The library is used to host many College functions – social gatherings, interviews, meetings, examinations and as a backdrop for official portraits.

The library is open to members, Fellows (both active and retired) and Friends of the College. Researchers and members of the public are welcome by appointment.

The Frank Forster Library is one of the finest obstetrical and gynaecological collections in the world. Some items are unique and not available elsewhere in Australia or even the rest of the world.
Artists’ books and zines are fast becoming prominent art forms around the world, and Manly Library has taken the opportunity to commence a collection of these and to therefore be at the forefront of this movement, creating a resource that will forever capture this moment in our social and artistic history.

Artists’ books and zines reflect their local communities, often in very unique ways, so it is important for libraries to collect them as part of the cultural history of the local region. Manly Library is the first public library in New South Wales to establish an Artist’s Book collection.

Artists’ books are used as a medium for self-expression, often using cross-disciplinary media. They may be constructed from a range of materials, varying from felt to metal, cardboard to wood, handmade paper to ceramics. Whatever the technique and material, the ‘book’ encompasses and embraces concepts associated with the fine arts.

A ‘zine’ is also an independently created publication, containing anything from personal experiences and stories to political ideologies or photography. Artists’ books and zines offer all spectrums of ideas and unfiltered interpretations of the world that we might not otherwise be able to access.

Manly Library is collecting artists’ books and zines from a range of sources, including individual artists, local artists, and established artist book distributors and publishers. We are also collecting works by young Australian art students. This collection is extending the role played by our library in the community and is supporting emerging young artists and local established artists in the community while also promoting these emerging and stimulating art forms. The project also focuses on one of the strengths of a library: representing vitality, creativity and relevance to the community. Through this project we recognise a link to the past coupled with aspirations for a stimulating future.

The Manley Library artists’ book and zine collections represent in a visual medium an important aspect of the intellectual activity of the people in our community. From its commencement the collections have become an important way of understanding and interpreting the literary, social, political, and cultural experience of our area, with the added dimension of international zines and artists’ books and works from across Australia.

We believe this collection, and the collecting of other alternative press materials helps ensure balanced and diverse collections, as well as enabling us to secure primary source material for scholars today and in the future. Having their work available at the public library is providing exposure for zinesters and book artists. It is a way of getting a message out and sharing ideas with others using these most approachable of formats. Artists’ books and zines also introduce library users to less ‘processed’ or less mainstream media, to which they might not previously have had access.

“Artists’ books and zines reflect their local communities”

We are pursuing several strategies to make the artists’ book and zine collection accessible to as wide a public as possible. Foremost among those strategies is detailed original cataloguing. The bibliographic records have descriptions of physical characteristics, subject matter and creators. There will be free-form descriptions using general tags allowing searching on keywords. In addition, the type ‘artists’ book’ or ‘zine’ is part of the catalogue record allowing searchers to browse each specific collection. The zine collection is available for loan, whilst the artists’ book collection is a reference collection. The artists’ book collection is a reference collection. The artists’ books are however accessible online using the ‘flipping book’ format through the library website. This provides access for people who are not able to visit the library in person and preserves the original works of art by minimising handling.

We have already purchased some outstanding materials and we are encouraged by the interest in our project. We are now planning an Acquisitive Artist Book Award at Manly and growing our popular zine collection in the future.

Vicki Smith
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PS: Just as INCITE went to press, Manly Library announced they will be hosting a travelling exhibition of artists’ books and zines titled Happily Ever After: Alternative Destinies in Contemporary Feminine Narrative from December 3rd to January 29th 2012. The exhibition features over 70 national and international artists and the library will also be hosting a series of events during the exhibition, including chats with the artists, workshops and demonstrations. For more information, visit the council website at www.manly.nsw.gov.au.
This year SA Water, the Art Gallery of South Australia and the State Library of South Australia partnered to deliver a program called The Wacky Sticky Soaky Flowy Thing. The program was designed to engage students ranging in age from four to 16, in water literacy by encouraging them to research one of five key areas and then challenging them to produce a creative piece to demonstrate their learning.

Students chose to focus on one of a choice of topics including the physical and chemical properties of water, the importance of water for all living things, the water cycle and how water connects everything on earth, social aspects or cultural significance in a program designed to cover a range of curriculum areas including science, studies of society and environment, art and English.


In April, SA Water and the State Library organised a series of writing workshops with local children’s authors Janeen Brian and Phil Cummings. Participating students were coached in writing either poetry or prose with a ‘watery’ flavour.

The Art Gallery offered guided tours for schools from February through July, focusing on exhibits in the collection which have a water theme.

Over 200 creative pieces from 21 schools across South Australia were received including short stories, posters, paintings, poems and even a hanging mobile. The judges selected 79 for inclusion in an anthology published by SA Water and launched at the State Library on October 16th to kick off National Water Week, with students, their teachers and families in attendance.

A selection of entered artwork was displayed in the Art Gallery for the duration of Water Week. Students who were able to attend the launch were thrilled to visit the Art Gallery next door and see their work on display. The Gallery also offered further group tours during Water Week focussing on the theme of water in Australian art, and a series of watercolour workshops.

The anthology is free to view online via [www.sawater.com.au/wackysticky](http://www.sawater.com.au/wackysticky/) (hover your mouse over each image to stop the autoscroll) or printed on demand via Blurb [www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/2564291](http://www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/2564291).

As well as providing a creative, challenging curriculum-based activity for all South Australian students, this program has brought together two cultural institutions and a special technical library in a unique collaboration thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Hayley Morton
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EVENTS

**NATIONAL**

*4 February*
Techs on Tour - the summer prequel
Contact Kerrie Kelly, kkelly@slv.vic.gov.au

*7 February*
Safer Internet Day
More information: www.cybersmart.org.au

*14 February*
Library Lovers Day and national launch
National Year of Reading

**VIC**

*2 December*
Victorian ALIA Library Technicians
End of Year Christmas Function
Celebrate with the Victorian ALIA Library Technicians
at our End of Year Christmas Function to be held at
the Great Northern Hotel, 644 Rathdowne Street, North
Carlton, Time: 6.30pm For more information, contact Kim
Wilson, ph 03 8664 7138, kwilson@slv.vic.gov.au

**WA**

*1 December*
ALIA WALT End of Year Dinner
6.30 for 7pm. All library technicians, library assistants,
library officer, students and friends welcome. Inglewood
Hotel Corner Fifth Avenue and Beaufort Street, Mt
Lawley Places Limited! Book your place now. For more
information, contact Judy Allan, pjallan@arach.net.au

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

Want to list your event on the ALIA website? Group members and office bearers – don’t forget to upload your event at www.alia.org.au/events/add. Not an ALIA event? Your LIS event may also be eligible to be added to our non-ALIA events.

Contact: events@alia.org.au for more information.

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ALIA ACTive congratulates Ms Kym Holden on becoming the group’s 2011 Outstanding Contribution Award recipient. Kym is the Director of Library Services at the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR).

Melissa King, Director, Office of the Secretary DEEWR congratulated Kym on behalf of the Department’s staff, noting that Kym has made an impressive contribution, working over a number of years to promote government libraries through the Australian Government Libraries Information Network including as Executive Convenor. Kym also sits on the University of Canberra Master of Information Studies Course Advisory Group as well as the Canberra Institute of Technology Centre for ICT Advisory Committee.

Kym has received this award in recognition of her contribution to ALIA and the profession through encouragement of capacity building and knowledge sharing for library staff across the ACT, her contribution to Information Awareness Month (which has effectively raised the profile of libraries within the information professions and supported many professional development activities), her contribution to the ACT ALIA committee, and her considerable achievements in the workplace, including delivery of new online training services along with development of library intranets and information skills in the department.

Parliamentary Librarian Roxanne Missingham said Kym’s achievements reflect extraordinarily well on the skills and knowledge of the profession, adding that Kym has also made a major contribution to Australian government libraries through her leadership in the Australian Libraries Government Information Network.

Kym is a valuable member of staff in DEEWR, expanding the profile of the library within the department and leading a dynamic and proactive library team.

Kym originally came to librarianship as a mature age student and worked at the Australian Defence Force Academy and the Australian National University Libraries before beginning work in the government library sector. She worked at the Australian Maritime Safety Authority and the Department of Industry in its various iterations from 1998 to 2006.

In 2006, Kym started at what was then the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) as Library Manager with the task of merging the DEWR and the Office of the Australian Safety & Compensation Council libraries. Her expertise in managing change was further utilised with the formation of DEEWR, merging the former DEWR and the Department of Education, Science and Training libraries.
PATTI MANOLIS JOINS INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC LIBRARY THINK TANK

Geelong Regional Library Corporation CEO Patti Manolis, has been selected as the only Australian participant to join the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation’s inaugural International Network of Emerging Library Innovators (INELI).

INELI aims to create an international pool of future library leaders to build and sustain public libraries throughout the world and to explore and address global library issues that have the potential to stimulate, expand or improve public library service. The network also aims to enhance the leadership skills of library professionals to enable them to redefine public libraries for the future in order to meet the unique in-country needs of their clients.

Ms Manolis’ appointment to INELI is a three year commitment to learning and engagement with other library leaders globally. She has agreed to travel to other countries, complete academic assignments and volunteer her time to work with other library professionals as part of this commitment.

Ms Manolis said, “INELI will provide great personal and professional development opportunities as well as functioning as a public library issues think tank. The issues explored and the learning achieved will be of direct benefit to Geelong Regional Library Corporation’s future planning and service delivery and I will also be looking for opportunities to share this knowledge with my Australian peers.”

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is establishing this Network in recognition of what they characterise as “the turbulent economic times public library leaders around the world are facing along with the crucial role public libraries play in educating communities and helping them respond to change”. The Foundation says one way to effectively ensure library leaders can respond to change is to provide them with opportunities to interact with each other to explore new ideas, experiment with new services and to learn from one another. The Foundation has created INELI as a platform to enable this to happen.

Following a competitive global application process Ms Manolis will now join 19 others from around the world in INELI. Other countries represented in the program will include UK, Kenya, Netherlands, Chile, Botswana, Germany, Philippines, Kyrgyzstan, Egypt, China, South Africa and New Zealand.
FELLOWSHIP WINNER LOOKS FOR ANSWERS

Jane Shelling’s team at the National Drugs Sector Information Service (NDSIS) of the Alcohol and other Drugs Information Service (ADCA) identify and disseminate evidence to support those working to prevent or reduce the harms caused by alcohol and other drugs. Their research over many years showed they had a group of clients that weren’t taking up the professional literature and they wanted to know why. An ALIA Professional Development posting motivated Jane to apply for a Churchill Fellowship to find some answers.

The purpose of my Churchill Fellowship was to assess methods for providing professional information to community based alcohol and other drugs (AOD) workers. I travelled to the USA, Canada and England to meet with and interview librarians, policy writers, researchers, academics, and AOD workers from specialist libraries, government departments, non-government organisations, and universities. I also attended two conferences, the first in Kansas City USA (the Substance Abuse Librarians and Information Specialist Conference), and the second in Manchester England (Evidence Based Library and Information Professionals Conference).

With every contact made I gained insight into individual views on working in the AOD field, issues related to local AOD workforces and specific information dissemination practices. I also raised specific questions about the factors that made AOD workers more receptive to receiving professional information, the type of information that should be disseminated and the form it should take, the specific dissemination methods that work best, how to assure dissemination best practice and finally, how do libraries fit into knowledge translation?

The response I received from all of the professionals I visited was welcoming and helpful, ensuring my trip was a great success. In particular the librarians from the Substance Abuse Librarians and Information Specialists (SALIS) group were very generous in sharing their expertise, networks, contacts and organisations with me.

A very full itinerary included highlights such as visiting the huge American institutions of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the National Library of Medicine, both impressive for their range of resources and magnitude of information reach. My itinerary also included the Alcohol Centre, Rutgers University in New Jersey, White Squirrel Way, Toronto’s largest mental health and addiction facility and the International Centre for Drug Policy at St. George’s Hospital in London.

My Fellowship helped me to find a way to improve an information service to a deserving part of the Australian workforce and reinvigorated my passion for librarianship. I established important overseas connections and a new Australian network of Churchill Fellows and increased my confidence in my ability to make change. I highly recommend the Churchill Fellowship scheme to all.

Jane Shelling
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A note on TinyURLs

I had a question recently about the shortened URLs that I include in this column, so a brief explanation is in order. In the ALIA blog and online versions of INCITE, these URLs are live hyperlinks on which you can click to go immediately to the page. On the printed page though, you’d have to type the addresses, so I try to make that easier by using the TinyURL service to reduce them to a more usable format. (There are several other services that can do this, but TinyURL serves the purpose well). It also prevents links from extending over several lines – which can look really tacky.

Could it be part of a new movement?

The Occupy protests in many parts of the world have been (not surprisingly) getting a fair bit of publicity – often for the wrong reasons. What’s been less obvious has been the provision of library services to the protesters. There was a story about the Underground Library in Manhattan (bxgossip.com/news/underground-library) and there were other sites in Dewey Square in Boston and near St Paul’s Cathedral in London. Librarything (www.librarything.com) is being used by some of them to do the collection management. There have also been a couple of suggestions that BookCrossing (www.bookcrossing.com) might be a better choice for the supporting technology. It’s an interesting question, depending on whether the books are to be set free or not.

Decisions, decisions

I was away when the National Library opened its Treasures Gallery, and I haven’t been to see it yet. I was interested in the time leading up to the opening to see that they had developed an iPhone app, and I wondered whether a comparable facility was being built for the NLA website. When I eventually saw the app, I realised that it was also built to function like an audio tour for when you visited the Gallery in person. But the emphasis was really on the smartphone experience (there’s also an Android version), with no plans initially for a web-based virtual tour. This is a mistake, as I see it. Despite the take-up of smartphones, most people also have access to a desktop – and the images from the Gallery are going to look a whole lot better on the larger screen.

All this came to mind when reading an article from Boagworld by Rob Borley (boagworld.com/mobile-web/mobile-maze/) that sets out what you should be thinking about when deciding how to address the mobile world. You may not agree with all of his observations but it’s a good starting point.

The long road to 2.0

Nicholas Gruen has been an active player in various spheres for a while, but many people only came to know of him during the Commonwealth’s Government 2.0 Taskforce, which he chaired. A couple of months ago he gave the 2011 Solomon Lecture, in which he considered the progress made by governments since the release of the Taskforce’s report. It’s fair to say that the report card is not one of which our public sector can be proud – especially in the area of the way they treat copyright. The main exception, which may come as a surprise to the casual observer, is the Queensland Police. The ABC, on the other hand, clings to some very outdated principles in preventing access to ‘their’ information. His whole speech is at tinyurl.com/6hsh3n9.

What is usability?

I liked the article by Tom Stewart at tinyurl.com/3hlqtvw in which he looks at some myths about usability. And with the first one he’s nailed the most important aspect: usability isn’t about making things easy, it’s about ensuring that the user can get things done.

Not yet a real plus

I’m still watching with great interest just what’s happening with Google+. In September they opened the service up to anyone who wanted to join (before then you needed to know someone to ask for an invitation) and traffic jumped. A short time later however, the overall level of usage dropped back to where it had been (tinyurl.com/68qjq6t). As Mike Dunn suggests in that article, it’s possibly because Google+ doesn’t offer anything that Facebook doesn’t – and that’s my impression too. Facebook activity among my friends is going strong, while those few who’ve dipped their toes in the Google+ water are doing their thing, but not really making any waves. It looks like the Big G is prepared to play a waiting game - but for how long, I wonder.

What was that again?

Dey Alexander reminds us that there’s a lot about accessibility that’s not so obvious: the use of jargon and local idioms can make it harder to get your message across (tinyurl.com/3pc7ujv). It’s something that irks me when dealing with call centres for banks; how much more difficult is it on a website when you can’t get an immediate translation?

All the news that’s fit to sell

With News Ltd’s announcement that premium content in The Australian will be put beyond a paywall, the Pew Report on tablet use offers little encouragement. They found that users of tablet devices are reading more news on them, but are still quite reluctant to pay for it. Read the report at www.journalism.org/analysis_report/tablet.

More on my blog

www.alia.org.au/webbssblog
Books, bytes and lattes seem an interesting combination and it represents a regional success story for the staff of the Mount Gambier Library in South Australia. In October 2011 INCITE we reported Cathryn Harris had just been named winner of the Nokia Business Innovation Award in the Telstra Business Women’s Awards – now she and her team have topped that off with the South Australian Library Achiever of the Year Award, sponsored by Ex Libris and presented on the 15th of November at the State Library of SA.

The judges said the staff at Mount Gambier Library has demonstrated libraries are about engaging the community and creating a sense of excitement and pride through innovative programming, special events and life-long learning. The vision behind the new library has successfully incorporated excellence in library spaces, programs and the use of information technology. Designed with the latest book retailing trends in mind, and with a fully integrated cafe, the space gives the look and feel of a social bookstore.

Innovative use of technology in the library extends from implementation of RFID and a self-checkout system to a learning lounge with 15 computers for both community information technology training and hire, and also includes being the first library in SA to introduce e-audio.

Collaborative ventures and partnerships have been used to maximise community benefit and participation in the library. The team has worked hard to secure ongoing support and sponsorship from local businesses and community organisations for programs such as Books and Beyond, taking the library outside the walls to promote both literacy and the library within the community. An alternative learning program, Finding My Place, helps at-risk youth develop skills needed for both careers and life after school.

The library has created a sense of vibrancy in an important regional city and assisted in building both community and a sense of optimism in a tough economic climate and a sense of uncertainty about the future for local industry. This is largely due to the innovative, creative and dedicated Mount Gambier Library team who strongly believe in the future of libraries as community builders and are willing to go above and beyond the normal expectations to achieve spectacular results.

Jeannine Hooper
SA State Manager, ALIA
jeannine.hooper@alia.org.au

SA Library Achiever of the Year Award
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Volume 32 Issue 12 | December 2011
MY DOCTOR DROVE A YELLOW FORD

When Anne Reddcliff began work in the Family History team at the State Library of New South Wales, the grand Mitchell library felt all but impenetrable to her. Then a chance conversation unlocked the collection’s secrets and now this library is one of Anne’s personal treasures.

When I started work in the Family History team at the State Library of NSW my Team Leader told me everyone has their own Mitchell. By this she meant everyone has their own appreciation of the Mitchell Library, home to the State Library’s legal deposit collection and original materials.

The Mitchell Library’s original materials collection ranges from the First Fleet journals to photographs of Sydney shopping arcades, from the Holroyd Oral History Project recording the memories of Holroyd residents in Sydney’s west to rare items such as Macquarie Collector’s Chest, recently rediscovered and now an important part of our collection.

Being a new librarian who graduated from high school in 1999, I found the Mitchell Library at first confusing, often esoteric and old-school to the point of anachronistic. I grew up using computer screens, not card catalogues. I couldn’t load microfilm. I dared not spell the word ‘realia’, let alone decode its meaning. It took me over an hour just to locate an item in the Mitchell Library stacks. I felt like I was sinking in a sea of microfilm reels and card catalogues, weighed down by the complexity of the Mitchell Library’s finding aids.

The State Library’s eRecords project is in part a response to this complexity, driven by the desire to open the Mitchell Library’s collections to the world. This project began in 2008 and by June 2013 will provide full electronic access to the library’s card catalogues. The eRecords project began in my first year at the State Library; back then I didn’t think I would ever find my Mitchell.

Because of its historic value, the original materials collection is perhaps the Mitchell Library’s most prominent collection. But the legal deposit collection was a mystery to me until I met my doctor with her lacklustre family history. She told me of her quest to uncover “something interesting” in her family history. (Admitting you work in family history often elicits requests for research help).

I told my doctor I would investigate, and one afternoon I found myself in the fading winter light of the Mitchell Library looking for call number Q610.7/S. This is the call number for the Faculty of Medicine’s Senior Year Book, published by the Sydney University Medical Society.

Under legal deposit legislation, each state library receives a copy of all printed items published in the state. In New South Wales these items come to the Mitchell Library so that we may preserve a record of life in this state. Legal deposit publications include university year books, school magazines and local histories. They are magnificent, often serendipitous, treasures cherished by librarians and family historians alike.

Flicking through the pages of student photographs I soon found my doctor’s student profile in the Senior Year Book for 1983. It gave me her maiden name, which I needed to begin the family history search. It also gave me a reason to value the Mitchell Library as more than just a source of perplexity and confusion. When that bound volume opened on my lap, my doctor’s Senior Year Book became the Mitchell Library discovery that was unique to me.

In 1983, my doctor looked like Jennifer Grey from Dirty Dancing. She travelled to India, drove a yellow Ford and is quoted as saying “I didn’t go to a private school”. Her name has changed since then but she still has the same broad smile she had in that Senior Year Book photograph.

I call that year book a treasure because it is a snapshot of the past alive in the present. It made me think the Mitchell Library’s legal deposit collection is like formaldehyde. It will preserve my doctor’s profile as she was in 1983, a medical student with a broad smile driving a yellow Ford to Sydney University. Her year book is now my Mitchell.

Anne Reddacliff
areddacliff@sl.nsw.gov.au

Anne Reddacliff has been a librarian for three years. She began her career at the State Library of NSW. Working in Family History she spends a lot of time researching other people’s family history and absolutely no time researching her own, being busy volunteering with the Black Dog Institute and St Vincent de Paul’s Compeer program.
Super early bird registration closes December 22

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From digital assets management to the National Year of Reading, the 2012 Biennial conference is a voyage of Discovery.

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Enquiries can be directed to the Conference Secretariat: International Conferences & Events (ICE) 183 Albion Street, Surry Hills, NSW, 2010 Phone: +61 2 9368 1200 Email: alia2012@iceaustralia.com Website: conferences.alia.org.au/alia2012/

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**TOM CHATFIELD TO HEAD BIENNIAL CONFERENCE LINE-UP**

Super early bird registrations are now open and planning is well underway for a conference to truly commemorate our 75th anniversary year. And in news just to hand, the Biennial Conference 2012 Committee has announced London-based author, commentator and technology theorist Dr Tom Chatfield will be the international keynote speaker in Sydney next July.

Dr Chatfield speaks, writes and broadcasts internationally on technology, media and culture. He is the author of three books exploring digital culture and new media and he will arrive in Sydney hot on the heels of publication of his fourth book, exploring what it means to thrive in a digital age (due for release in May 2012).

Tom’s latest digital projects include lead writing and design work on The End, a browser-based game exploring philosophical concepts of death, developed by Preloaded for Channel 4 Education. Since its release in late 2011, it has gained over three million players and was named the Best Game of 2011 at the British Interactive Media Association awards. He has also contributed to transmedia projects including the location-based Wanderlust app and the ARG Perplex City.

Tom’s speaking and writing career has included working with the likes of Google, Teach For All, Mind Candy, BBC Worldwide, Channel 4 Education, Six to Start, VCCP, Grek, Red Glasses and Intervox. He is an associate editor at Prospect magazine, a faculty member at London’s School of Life and a guest faculty member at the Said Business School, Oxford. As well as regular radio and television work, his appearances have included TED Global and TED@Cannes, authors@Google, World Congress on Information Technology, London Book Fair, Science Foo Camp, OpenTech, and presentations to British political party conferences of every stripe, to name just a few.

Tom tweets at @TomChatfield, blogs at tomchatfield.net, and is a keen jazz pianist. Will his keynote address be music to your ears? Super Early Bird Registration is now open for the Biennial Conference. Numbers are limited so reserve your place now (see the advertisement on this page for details).
Library Initiative shipments complete
With the final shipment of Pleotalk devices from Vision Australia, distribution of print disability access devices are now complete and the service is now available through over 175 public library service points in Australia. Library clients with print disability now have access to over 1250 devices and the associated content. The Library Initiative has been funded by the Australian Government and supported by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. The Department has provided much more than financial support and we thank them and the Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Carers, Senator Jan McLucas for their ongoing commitment to the Initiative. We also thank the public library staff who are providing dedicated support and innovative programs to provide access to the devices to their clients.

Acting ALJ Editorial Board Chair
ALIA Past President Graham Black has accepted the role of interim Chair of the Australian Library Journal Editorial Board while the ALIA Board seeks a new Chair for this committee. Our thanks go to departing Chair Keith Webster for his contribution to guiding ALJ and service to the Research and Publishing Standing Committee in that role.

Got a story for National Year of Reading?
There’s lots going on for the National Year of Reading (see our stories, page 3). And there are lots of ways to tell your National Year of Reading story too. Just like INCITE, Good Reading magazine is interested in hearing from libraries through 2012. Stories (maximum length 400 words) and images (minimum of 300 dpi resolution) can be emailed to Rowena Cseh at editor@goodreadingmagazine.com.au. Or email Rowena about any big ideas you might have.
ALIA is to cease providing a voucher trading system for interlibrary loans, phasing in the cessation between now and June 30, 2012. ALIA will stop issuing new vouchers from December 1st, 2011 and will honour redemption of vouchers held by ALIA institutional or voucher-only members until June 30, 2012.

This decision follows an evaluation of the Voucher Scheme which included a survey of users conducted earlier this year.

The ALIA inter-library lending voucher scheme has been a valuable service to members for many years. It has however been the subject of diminishing value to members and increasing difficulty for the Association for some time. Usage of this scheme among libraries has been consistently decreasing over the years and the National Library of Australia ceased accepting ALIA vouchers as payment for interlibrary loans and document supply from 1 June 2000.

ALIA will however continue to play a broad role in the interlibrary loan environment, ensuring members’ input into future revisions of the Resource Sharing Code. ALIA National Office staff will also assist any current members seeking assistance in migrating from the voucher scheme to alternative systems. Any enquiries can be directed to Rob Miller, the Chief Operating Officer of ALIA on 02 6215 8220 or enquiry@alia.com.au. For information on how to redeem vouchers, visit the website at www.alia.org.au/interlibrary.lending/vouchers.html.
Australian public libraries will benefit from an initiative that will provide information on cybersafety for staff and the public through information sessions sponsored by Safer Internet Group (SIG) members including Yahoo!, Google and ALIA.

The information sessions are being provided by the members of the Safer Internet Group and facilitated by project partner, the Alannah and Madeline Foundation with the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) providing information brochures and resources.

The sessions cover the latest research into what young people are actually doing online, identifying risks such as cybersafety, cyberbullying and e-security and understanding the positive benefits online engagement can provide, including socialisation, empowerment and education. Strategies and tools for parents to keep their kids safe online are also discussed and best-practice resources will be showcased.

For further information please contact Lynne Makin, Secretariat Safer Internet Group and Project Manager Q&A Nights on 02 6056 0400 or email lynne@lcmsolutions.net.au.

### NEW MEMBERS

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<td>St Francis of Assisi</td>
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<td>Victoria Voit</td>
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### ASSOCIATION NEWS

**LOWDOWN**

GET THE ONLINE LOWDOWN

**NEW LIBRARY TECHNICIAN**

Peta Kemmis  QLD
Kier McFarlane  QLD
Melissa Donn  NSW
Deborah Cronan  QLD
Lizzie Mary Fernandez  WA
Deborah Van Melis  VIC
Judith Ann Jones  NSW
Debra Rendell  VIC
Domenica Sardi  WA
Karen Cochrane  VIC
Angela Allen  QLD
Chantansa Iyassingham  VIC
Jasmine Jordan  NSW

**NEW MEMBER**

Gretlyn Lloyd  NSW
Linda Nixon  NSW
Ray Dwalibor  NSW
Takako Matoba  WA
Loren Lees  QLD
Peter Kenneally  VIC
Jessica Madureira  WA
Brett Fenton  VIC
Alison Peacock  NSW
Kathleen Forner  NT
Anne Kennedy  SA
Hue Nghi Chong  NSW
Susan Dram  NSW
Ludwig Sugir  NSW
Rebecca Williams  VIC
Shyamali Seneviratne  NSW
Jacinta Cloney  ACT
Grand Stone  WA
Ester Blau  VIC
Jacqueline Denning  WA
Thien Thien Lwin  NSW
Claire Regan  VIC
Josephine Gaspar  VIC
Cathryn Holler  WA
Sarah Treweek  VIC
Katie Taylor  ACT
Kerrie Peterson  NSW
Bandana Koirala  NT
Maggie Ivanovna  VIC
Kara Bystrom  VIC
Connie Hoath  VIC
Nicole Smith-Forest  SA
Ryan Sinwardene  VIC
Jascha V J Vattathara  INR
Ursula Kelly  NSW
Catherine McIntyre  SA
Amanda Olding  TAS
Bernadette Turner  WA
Anne Reddcliff  NSW
Michelle Knight  QLD
Ellen Broad  ACT
Lorraine Stokes  VIC
Susannah Pearce  VIC
Tracy Roberts  WA
ShukYing Cheung  NSW
John Watson  VIC
Jenny McKnight  VIC
Sharon Malcolm  NSW
Karlene Addington  NSW
Jennifer Watson  NSW
Renu Nair  WA
Sharen Cordina  WA
Robert Schnierer  TAS
Nina Schonfeldt  QLD
Julie Snedden  SA
Matthew Broderick  VIC
Evan Blood  QLD
Rachael Johnson  NSW
Susan Sautter  SA
Dejan Petrovic  QLD
Lisa Decleva  VIC
Wing Hong Liu  HKD
Samantha Turnbull  SA
Catherine Norton  TAS
Michael Houstone  NSW
Jenny Cogg  VIC
Jo-Anne Shaw  SA
Leah Pringle  NSW
Ralph Bergmann  NSW
Kalii James  QLD
Susie Bight  VIC
Kellie Feisold  NSW
Robert Carbone  NSW
Veyran Croggon  VIC
Jennifer Manfield  VIC
Anthony Jessup  TAS

**Readmitting Associate**

Ahmed Sayed  VIC
Andrew Waters  QLD
Judith Richter  SA
Pamela Barnett  WA

**Readmitting Institution**

Dalton Mc Caughney Library  VIC
Waverley Municipal Library  VIC
Royal Australasian College of Physicians  NSW

**Readmitting Member**

Kerr Ballle  QLD
Suzette Hefford  SA
Kellie Arny Weng  VIC
Jessica Brown  NSW
Kirsty Butler  NSW
Lorraine Jennings  NSW
Annie Lewis  SA
Guido Tressoldi  VIC
Uta Enneking-McQuillan  SA

**Reedmitting Member to Technician**

Kevin Gilltrap  QLD
Benjamin Thomson  NSW
Harlinah Teoh  VIC
Benjamin Thomson  NSW
Kevin Gilltrap  QLD
Alisha Nolan  QLD
Rebecca Sedgman  WA
Sharon Bunce  QLD

**New Member**

Suzanne Pearce  SA

**New Associate**

Kevin Gilltrap  QLD
Benjamin Thomson  NSW
Harlinah Teoh  VIC
Benjamin Thomson  NSW
Kevin Gilltrap  QLD
Alisha Nolan  QLD
Rebecca Sedgman  WA
Sharon Bunce  QLD

**New Associate (Allied Field)**

Suzanne Pearce  SA
Happy 75th ALIA

2012 is our 75th anniversary. And what a busy 75 years it has been. Now is the time to remember, reminisce and review. How will we be marking this great achievement that has seen the Association move from an environment in which it took days to travel to a gathering to the instant worldwide connectedness we now take for granted? What stands out in the achievements of our profession and our Association through that time? And why?

Deadline for stories is January 6, 2012.

Check the guidelines for contributions at www.alia.org.au/publishing/incite/guidelines.html and email your stories and images to incite@alia.org.au. Please note all images must be high resolution (at least 300dpi) and sent separately as jpg files. Images may be reproduced in print and online.

UniSA’s Bachelor of Arts (Indigenous Cultures and Australian Society). Your pathway to a meaningful career.

If your ambition is to help make a positive change and bring new passion, perspective and vision to the future of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians you should start with UniSA’s Bachelor of Arts (Indigenous Cultures and Australian Society).

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This degree offers flexibility and caters for both internal and external learning needs.

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THE WAY WE WERE

Gordon Bower has been an active member of ALIA for many years. He’s now taking a look back and updating our history in honour of our 75th anniversary in 2012.

When I started work as an unqualified junior library assistant (Aka the lowest rank available) I never dreamed that almost fifty years on I would be writing for INCITE. Between then and now I have been lucky enough to have worked in or around libraries of one sort or another here in Australia and in England. It included an exhilarating but too short a term as Executive Director of the then Library Association of Australia (LAA) and ten wonderful years as Executive Officer of the Australian Council of Libraries and Information Services (ACLIS) for the whole period of its existence. The LAA has been an important part of my life, particularly in the 70s, when I was heavily involved in the NSW Branch and the Public Libraries Section.

So against this background I was pleased to respond to a suggestion from Sue Hutley to ‘volunteer’ for some work with ALIA. The Association will in 2012 be celebrating 75 years since the establishment of its predecessor in the form of the Australian Institute of Librarians. There will be a range of activities to mark this occasion but it was thought that one activity should be an overview of ALIA’s history.

There is already the major work by Jean Whyte and David Jones, which covers in extraordinary and fascinating detail the life of the Australian Institute of Librarians 1937 – 1949. So it was decided that some coverage of the following years, from 1950 to 2000 should be written. It is this work that is now occupying a reasonable chunk of my life in retirement and what an interesting exercise it is turning out to be.

This period roughly parallels my life in libraries so it has been a wonderful exercise in looking into the records, writings and photographs from this time. It has stirred some memories (some accurately remembered and some, shall we say, rather less than perfectly remembered!)

It was agreed at the outset that the new work would not try to emulate Jean’s and David’s work in terms of the level of detail and extensive references. Rather, it was decided that we try to take something of a helicopter view of the Association and seek out some of the major highlights of those years. One approach will be the preparation of an annotated timeline. This will, for example, take into account such key issues as the extensive work of the Board of Education, the lengthy and often acrimonious debate about the physical location of the Association and the eventual move to Canberra, as well as many other topics. This work is proceeding well and it is expected that it forms part of next year’s celebrations.

There is a great opportunity for you to participate in this ongoing work. If you have a memory of some activity which particularly interested you, why not tell us about it? Perhaps your professional life was heavily influenced by ‘one of the greats’ in the teaching or mentoring you enjoyed. Just email me at the address below and give me a brief note, preferably with the time of the activity and a few words about why you think it is important.

In the meantime, I am enjoying reliving some of my life and remembering ‘the way we were’.

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