

Your voice

Local cataloguing under threat

The Hennepin County Library (HCL) catalogue, an influential exemplar of excellence, is under threat. Crafted over many years by Sandy Berman and his dedicated team, this catalogue has been a seminal work demonstrating the idiocy of many of the Library of Congress arcane descriptors by the very practical action of replacing them with user-friendly terminology based on natural and contemporary language.

It is now mooted to cease all local cataloguing at Hennepin County, give the catalogue away to OCLC and henceforth accept OCLC records unquestioningly and unedited, despite the many awards and honours, and the not inconsiderable royalties, the HCL catalogue has earned.

This is not just a local issue — it potentially impacts on every library in Australia, because the HCL catalogue was a practical example of the benefits of local cataloguing which also highlighted problems of under-

cataloguing in other collections, and a means of advocacy to the Library of Congress which, as a result, has implemented changes which benefit us all.

It is ironic that just as libraries should be realising that local cataloguing is the only way in which web sites are going to be made accessible to library users as an extension of hardcopy resources, we are about to lose a resource that would continue to assist in making all resources more accessible.

Jennifer Cram, Kenmore Qld

That woman

The team at the Information and Library Studies Department at Box Hill Institute luuuuuurved the cover of *March inCite*, and its connection with last year's poster. Congrats.

Kay Cole, Box Hill, Vic

Your views of aliaNEWS

I think this aliaNEWS online is wonderful. It saves paper and postage, and I can read it before my husband throws it out!

As an outback librarian, I sometimes feel very isolated. I attended

Information online and on disc 99 and was amazed at the wonderful feeling of comradeship that was still there with colleagues that I hadn't seen for years. I hadn't realised how much I miss that contact by not being able to attend ALIA functions. It is lovely to receive this newsletter as e-mail as somehow it seems more personal and more in contact with other souls than the paper copy. Keep it coming!

Ruthi Urbach, Scone, NSW

Having just received and read my first issue of aliaNEWS I had to let you know that I think this kind of broadcast is an excellent idea. I live in Warrnambool and it is great to be informed of such addresses, and be in the know of events coming up.

Sally Armistead, Warrnambool Vic

Thank you, thank you, thank you... aliaNEWS is great, especially for those of us a little more physically isolated than most, but still vitally interested in the happenings of the library world. So convenient to have this service on e-mail.

Sally Hays, Margaret River, WA

Thanks for the aliaNEWS broadcast and particularly the information about Sherlock. I have just upgraded to Mac OS8.5 and I'm very impressed with the plug-in. Now I have another reason to boast about why I have resisted the pressure to change to that other type of computer!

Leonie Bourke, Camberwell Vic

This is splendid! I expect it will get loads of use. Do you have any facility for recording/analysing access? It would be interesting to know what the pattern is. Congratulations to all involved.

John Levett, Middleton Tas

This is good stuff. Congratulations.
Warren Horton, Canberra ACT

Your voice

Your letters on any issue of relevance to the library and information sector are welcomed.

All letters should be addressed to the *inCite* editor and may be e-mailed to incite@alia.org.au, or faxed to 02 6282 2249, or posted to: Your voice, ALIA, PO Box E441, Kingston ACT 2604. Please include your name and postal address with your letter or e-mail.

Letters will be accepted for publication until the 18th of the month.

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