

Library and Information Week in the west

One-hundred library and information professionals met on a balmy autumn evening at the Constitutional Centre in West Perth to celebrate the launch of Library and Information Week 2001 in Western Australia. The week was officially launched by Sheila McHale Minister for the Arts and Culture, whose portfolio includes libraries. Ms McHale spoke passionately on the need for open access to all to information and the Western Australian government's approach to ensuring this is maintained. Our main speaker was Professor David Black, a political commentator and consultant to the John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library. Professor Black spoke about his 'relationship' with libraries and librarians throughout his career. Also included, in an action packed evening, was the presentation of the Western Australian Special Librarian of the Year, awarded to Ini Campbell Fraser.

However celebrations did not start and stop in West Perth. Library and information professionals throughout Western Australia threw themselves behind the week, participating in many different ways.

Special librarians held quizzes, had workshops on online searching techniques, and hosted morning teas to thank their supporters.

School libraries, particularly in primary schools, participated in the National Simultaneous Storytime. Pru Mitchell, of John Septimus Roe Anglican Community School Library and Information Services reports that Year 1 students autographed the endpapers of the library's brand new copy of *Edward the emu*. She hopes that students will 'continue to get enjoyment from revisiting their copy of *Edward* ... and that their handwriting will mature a little also!'

At St Mary's Anglican Girls School a library subcommittee, consisting of students in Year 11 and two Year 12 library prefects, developed an exiting and stimulating week of events, including 'The great debate', attended by students from year 5 to 9 from a variety of schools, and a thank you event looking back to the founders of the school.

Events organised by public libraries



(l-r) Deanne Barrett and Lee Williams congratulate Ini Campbell Fraser (center), the Western Australian Special Librarian of the Year

included internet classes, morning teas, having the Council CEO working on the issues desk, holding pyjama parties and running a myriad of competitions from crosswords to quizzes to jigsaw puzzle competitions. Many public library systems obtained media exposure through their local papers.

Public libraries also looked to market their library service to council staff, as well as to their regular clientele. Viv Barton, manager of the Stirling Library Service, reports that a static display was arranged in the staff canteen and each lunch time during the week two library staff presented a display of new stock from the various libraries in the service.

At Rockingham Regional Campus Community Library, a joint use library, a book fair and sausage sizzle was arranged. Pam McCready reports that the idea was to have a social/working lunch so that Challenger TAFE staff could come and view selected titles 'on apro' from local book suppliers. Titles selected by the staff will be purchased and made available to students.

WA Branch Council sponsored an 'internet hunt', with a prize of a \$300 voucher to purchase software. Support was obtained from OnlineWA, a portal to information on Western Australia, with a banner advertisement on their front page. The winner of the competition, Lawley Yukich, was presented

with the prize at his local public library.

The LIW committee disseminated information about the week to the widest possible audience. Highlights included a 'Me and my job' profile of 'information overlord' Natarsha Larment, librarian at the Western Australian Chamber of Minerals and Energy; an interview with the acting state librarian in *The West Australian*; as well as other events listings. Verity James of ABC radio interviewed Bobbie Bruce, president of the WA Branch and Curtin University Radio interviewed Hilary Hatfield of Morley Public Library. The majority of local papers (both city and regional) were approached and were happy to publish stories on what their community was undertaking for Library and Information Week.

The committee utilised several methods of 'spreading the word', including mailouts and e-mails. A consistent campaign of alerting library and information professionals throughout Western Australia as to what was planned for the week paid dividends. A calendar of events was compiled with more than 100 individual activities, and as not every library contributed to the calendar we are sure there were many more events happening to let the West know about Library and Information Week 2001.

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