

Volunteers in the Spotlight



Michelle Thomason,
Convener,
ALIA Vic and
ALIA New
Graduates
Group
Victorian
Co-ordinator

You've taken on two major roles with ALIA and it's only a few years since you graduated into the profession. How did that happen?

I went to my first ALIA function while studying at RMIT. I joined as a student member when the New Grads Group was just establishing. At the NLS in Adelaide I was asked to become the Victorian Convener of the New Grads Group and said yes, because I wanted

to increase the activity of the Group and myself within the profession. It seemed like a natural progression to join the committee of ALIA Vic in 2005. I went to my first meeting as a newcomer and left that evening as the Treasurer! One year later I put up my hand to be Convener.

So did you jump into those roles, or were you pushed?

I guess a bit of both. I really enjoy my job and the profession and I want the chance to give back to it more vocally. I like the social side and the networking. It's good to be part of the decision-making of the Association and I enjoy running PD sessions. I think that if a session interests me, it will probably interest other people too. It was a quick move from student member to Convener, but the rest of the committee is well established.

You're working in the library at the Royal Children's Hospital, is that your first job in the information industry?

I joined RCH as a new graduate. Before that I was at the Family Law Court as a Library Officer. This is a great role in a small team with a good mix of duties. I like the health environment and can

see myself staying in this sector. Mum's a nurse, so maybe hanging around hospitals as a kid has something to do with me feeling comfortable here.

You didn't take on librarianship straight after school?

My undergraduate degree is as a kindergarten teacher. I worked overseas and when I initially wanted to move into libraries I began training as a library technician, before starting the post-graduate course.

You're off on holidays, what's the plan?

A whirlwind trip overseas, including time in South Africa and meeting up with my two sisters in the UK for a wedding and some partying.

**Interviewed by
Margie Anderson
LLO, Victoria**

Outstanding paper

ALIA members Carol Newton-Smith (UWA) and Gillian Hallam (QUT) have won an Outstanding Paper award. Their article – a comparative review of the mentoring programs for young LIS professionals in WA and Queensland – has been recognised in the Emerald Literati Network Awards for Excellence 2007.

Bibliographic details for the article are Hallam, G. and Newton-Smith, C. (2006). 'Evaluation of traditional

mentoring for new library and information professionals: what are the professional and personal outcomes for the participants'. *Library Management*, 27(3):154–67.

More information about the awards can be found at this link on the Emerald website: http://www.emeraldinsight.com/info/authors/literati_newtwork/awards/papers_2007.jsp.

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