

Spotlight on Liz Burke

This is the first of an occasional series of interviews from ALIA's Local Liaison Offers, spotlighting a volunteer who contributes to the profession and to ALIA.

This month, Natarsha Larment discovers what makes Liz Burke tick. Liz is the convenor of ALIA West and works at— no, let her tell you.

Why do you enjoy volunteering for the library profession?



Having recently moved to Perth, it's an excellent way to build networks, get to know people – and have some fun!

What are 3 things you'd like us to know about you?

1) I think libraries are an exciting place to work: there are endless opportunities to develop library services and initiatives, and to develop my own skills.

2) I used to be a chocolate fiend, now my favourite foods are cherry tomatoes and snow peas.

3) I'm allergic to boredom.

How do you ensure balance between your work, volunteering and home commitments?

I'm a morning person, so while I arrive in the office about 7:30am, I make sure I leave no later than 5:30pm and this gives me the evening to devote to other activities. I also ensure I have a few evenings at home each week. Saturday is my day off when I do nothing but home things, and while I may do some work on Sundays, I also fit in a bike ride or a long walk or a trip to the beach.

What gives you a sense of purpose and accomplishment?

Reaching a goal or a deadline (such as finishing this article on time!)

If you were offered your ideal rôle in the world, what would it be?

Supporting others to reach their potential. There would, of course, be a lot of world travel involved in this rôle!

Which kinds of libraries have you worked in?

Mostly libraries associated with education – universities or supporting English Language for migrants. But also a brief stint at the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works (did you know there is a difference between sewage and serage?!). And prior to completing my library degree, I completed placements in public libraries and the Victorian State Records Office.

What are you currently reading?

A biography of Xavior Herbert, a crime novel by Natasha Cooper, a book on building teams and a book on marketing concepts for libraries.

What do you feel are your greatest achievements and successes?

Overcoming a fear of public speaking, becoming a step-mother, and completing a course on training my dog (being a cat person, I needed to learn about dog psychology!)

What do you currently do for a crust?

I'm currently Associate Librarian (Reader Services) at the University of Western Australia. It's a fabulous job because of the great people I work with.



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