

Books by the barrow load... on the beach

The City of Port Phillip Library Service has launched its 'Wheelbarrow Library'. Our 'beach book barrow' aims to promote reading, relaxation and library services to visitors and residents enjoying the Port Phillip foreshore, here in Melbourne.

A couple of times a week during summer, library staff can be seen on the foreshore pushing a bright orange 'barrow' full of withdrawn books that have come to the end of their shelf-life within the walls of our library. Beachgoers of all persuasions are invited to rummage through our barrow and select a book to read while they enjoy the beautiful summer weather. People are able to improve their minds as well as their tans!

"Our bright orange wheelbarrow is hard to miss," says library spokesperson Rose Nolan, "It's decked out with bells, streamers, an orange safety flag and, of course, the council logo on the side". The City of Port Phillip has five libraries and 11 kilometres of beaches including St Kilda Beach, the most popular around the bay. The beach book barrow service is offered on hot days, depending on the availability

of staff, sunscreen and hats. "It's been hot and St Kilda Beach has been packed with backpackers. Travel guides went like cold drinks," she said.

All the books given out on the beach carry a sticker saying: "This book began its journey in a wheelbarrow library on a beach in Melbourne as part of the Port Phillip Library Service. It wants to travel – so please read, enjoy and pass on." There is room below for future readers to add their names and cities.

Like all libraries, Port Phillip Library Service relies on an ongoing program of acquisition and withdrawal to keep collections fresh and up-to-date. Storage of these items is an issue, so Port Phillip has continued to donate books to local community organisations and conducts annual book sales. The Wheelbarrow Library provides another means by which withdrawn library books – having started their life in Port Phillip – can be passed on to the community to be enjoyed and re-circulated. Since the Wheelbarrow library's grand launch in early February 2007, it has attracted a great deal of

media interest – appearing in two local papers, the Age and on Channel 10 news. As well as being a great promotion for our library service, this exposure has also resulted in a number of not-for-profit community care or charity organisations contacting us about becoming a second home for ex-library stock. Along with the satisfied glee of seeing a beach full of sunbathers all intently reading, it's great to be making these connections that extend the life of old library books and the value they hold for the community.

Nick Whittock

Port Phillip Library Service



The City of Port Phillip's wheelbarrow library service has been a hit with beachgoers on Melbourne's busy St Kilda Beach (Picture: Carmel Shute)



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Staying connected with ALIA

Retired, or contemplating retirement? If so, you might be deciding whether to retain your ALIA membership. You may also be wondering how to maintain your connections to the profession. Answers to these questions are among the chief concerns of a working party recently formed to provide advice to the ALIA Membership and Awards Standing Committee on our services to retired members of the library and information industry.

Members of the working party – Faye Lawrence (NSW), Mylee Joseph (NSW), Niki Kallenberger (NSW), Pat Gallaher (WA) and Robyn Ellard (ACT) – believe ALIA still has a lot to offer you, and that you have much to offer ALIA and the profession regardless of your retired status. We believe, however, that ALIA could do more for you than we do at present. Would you value a specific

e-list for retirees, perhaps, to keep you up-to-date on people, places and events? Would you like access to a clearinghouse for volunteer opportunities or casual work? Would you be interested in the opportunity to mentor younger members of the profession? If you want to stay involved and connected, we are looking for ways to help you do so.

How ALIA can better encourage members who are retired to remain engaged with the profession and the association? Please send your thoughts to me.

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