

The LIANZA Conference (TRANZFORM Te Tinihanga 2007) was held in Rotorua, New Zealand, 9–12 September, 2007.

The conference theme 'Tranzform' was highlighted at the start of the conference, with Penny Carnaby, National Librarian of New Zealand and the Hon. Judith Tizard, Minister of Arts, Culture and Heritage speaking particularly in relation to New Zealand libraries' digital enhancements. International delegates came from Australia, New Zealand, Pacific Islands, England and America.

I am a Liaison Librarian at the University of Western Sydney (UWS), Penrith Campus, Sydney, New South Wales where I have worked for four years. I attended the conference as a newcomer to the LIANZA conferences and also to an overseas conference. The main objectives of my attendance included:

- learn and bring back new ideas to the libraries of the University of Western Sydney (UWS)
- network with the library staff from the diverse number of New Zealand libraries (from academic to public libraries and others)
- speak with the vendors present at the conference and discuss with them their new products and services.

PAPER HIGHLIGHTS

The workshops, keynote sessions and concurrent sessions I attended can be summarised using the following three themes:

1. Information Literacy Developments

A workshop presented by Chris Powis (Learning Support Co-ordinator at University College Northampton) and Jo Webb (Business, Law and Humanities Team Manager at De Montfort University in Leicester) was entitled 'Shrugging off

the Cardigan: Learning and Teaching Identities'. This workshop looked at the teacher and learner in the university environment, changes taking place with learning in the educational environment and examined the functions of learning (motivation, orientation, explanations and appraisals). This was a hands-on workshop in which everyone actively participated and many stimulating ideas were discussed. The second information literacy concurrent session I attended was on biblioblogging, and entitled 'Biblioblogging: Blogs for Library Communication'. This was applicable to information literacy developments within the academic libraries, with a focus on other methods for disseminating information to students through blogs, in addition to face-to-face teaching.

2. Customer Service Developments

The keynote address, delivered on the third day by Ian Brooks, Chairman of the New Zealand Association for Customer Excellence, was an excellent presentation; a 9.30 am start after partying at the conference dinner to the early hours of the morning! His theme was on customer service and identified four salient aspects: getting to know the customer, giving the customer control, going the extra mile for them and maintaining a customer focus at all times. The presentation included having the audience actively involved in the conversation the whole time, interspersed with fits of laughter, but allowing time for reflection on the points and examples.

3. The Reference Enquiry Service

The workshop on the image of the reference librarian entitled 'Beauty and the Beast: What Lurks Behind the University Library Reference Desk?' was delivered by Charlotte Clements and Gael Lamont and provoked a very interesting and lively discussion in the

hour and a half allocated. The workshop involved group work, presentations and discussions. For example, the first activity involved each person within their group describing a person whom they had been admired by in their Reference Librarian role capacity. This was followed by discussing a person we remembered as the 'Scary Librarian' and a person known to intimidate and frighten clients away.

There were many other sessions I attended with just as much interest from which I was able to gather new ideas to bring back to my workplace at UWS.

EXTRA-CURRICULA HIGHLIGHTS

The conference dinner was an amazing success. I was a little anxious attending for two reasons: not knowing anyone and feeling under-dressed for the tropical dinner theme. But this all changed with the beautiful Hawaiian flowers on each seat. Everyone was hospitable, came over to talk, mingled and, of course, danced all night. And the same success applied to the organisation of the Newcomers' Morning. Some of my other experiences while in Rotorua were an evening visit to the Mitai Maori village (for a taste of the Maori culture), a guided walking tour of some of the volcanic areas around Rotorua, attending a Maori Anglican church service and, in winding down, a visit to the Blue Baths Polynesian Spas. And to feel at home, I went on my daily morning walk through the thermal springs and made a first attempt at horse-riding around the green tranquil farms of Rotorua.

I hope to go back soon to this beautiful town and also to visit the many other wonderful parts that New Zealand has to offer. Congratulations to the committee of LIANZA on such a success! See the conference website at <<http://www.lianza.org.nz/events/conference2007/>>

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