

Volunteers in the Spotlight



Sue Chilman is currently the Deputy Convenor of the ALIA Top End Group and served as the Group Support Officer in 2006. She was Secretary of the LAA NT group (as it was known then) in 1984, a member of the Committee from 1983–84, and on the organising committee (1984–1986) of the 1986 ALIA Biennial Conference, held in Darwin.

Why do you enjoy volunteering for the library profession?

I firmly believe in the quote 'We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give', and so have always volunteered for a wide variety of community groups. By volunteering for the library profession I am helping to improve it, for myself and others, and raising public awareness of the diversity and challenge that the library profession provides. Also, I enjoy meeting staff from different libraries.

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

I drive a red convertible sports car; I have lived in Queensland, NSW, Victoria and the NT; and I enjoy patchwork and quilting in my spare time.

How do you ensure balance between your work, volunteering and home commitments? It's much easier now that my two children have left home.

What gives you a sense of purpose and accomplishment?

Helping other people gives me a sense of accomplishment and purpose. I suppose that is why I really enjoy working in public libraries and also why I spend a lot of time volunteering.

If you could have your ideal role in the world, what would it be?

Roving the world, visiting all those places I've ever read about, while educating governments and the general public about the benefits of libraries.

Which kinds of libraries have you worked in?

I began my career in a TAFE college in Brisbane. It was an interesting start in librarianship – I was 21, in a one-person library, the only female on staff, and the same

age as many of the students. Currently I am the Manager of the City Library, one of four Darwin City Council Libraries.

What are you reading at the moment?

I always have a few books on the go at one time. At the moment they are *Marley and Me* by John Grogan, *The Purpose Driven Church* by Rick Warren and *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom. All quite different, very enjoyable and enlightening.

What do you feel are your greatest achievements and successes?

My greatest achievements on a personal level include being happily married for 28 years to the love of my life (whom I met when we were both 15), and raising two wonderful, independent children. On a professional level, presenting a paper at the 4th ALIA Top End Symposium in 2006 and changing the opening hours of the State Reference Library of the NT so that it was open 7 days a week instead of just business hours.

Interview by Jayshree Mamtora,
LLO Northern Territory

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