

Boarderline



Jan Richards
Vice-president
(President-elect)

Two months into my new role as Vice-president (President-elect) of ALIA and yes, I still feel like the new kid on the block! So why did I decide to nominate? It's a question I was asked many times during the election, and one which caused my erstwhile PA to utter the phrase "are you mad, woman?"

Believe me it wasn't a decision taken lightly although I'd been contemplating it for 18 months. I've been a member of ALIA (then

the LAA) since I started work as a trainee librarian in 1972 (that will get the mental arithmetic going!). I am a great believer in 'giving back', whether it be to your family, your community, your profession or your professional association. Sure I've been involved at a regional and special interest level but there are times when you need to take that next step, and for me that's now.

In my 'other' job I'm the Manager of Central West Libraries, a regional library service which is centred on the provincial city of Orange and serves 5 councils (7 libraries) on the Central Tablelands and Western Slopes of NSW. I adore my job both for the diversity it offers and the location in one of Australia's most beautiful cities. Most of my professional life has been public library based, although I did have a short love affair with government specials. However the lure of community based provision proved too strong.

I am a graduate of Charles Sturt University (BA Library & Information Science). I'm currently undertaking my Masters in Museum Studies at Macquarie University in preparation for the development of a converged facility in Orange which will incorporate the existing Library and Regional Gallery and will include museum spaces. I'm really enjoying the course which builds on my considerable experience in local studies.

My professional interests encompass customer focussed services and collections; exploring and expanding the library's role in the community; forming strategic partnerships and alliances; and the marketing and promotion of libraries. My concern for the last two points has led to me develop and coordinate the @ your library® campaign in NSW over the past 4 years.

Because I'm passionate about public libraries and believe that advocacy is the key to their recognition, I have held a number of executive positions on peak bodies including Public Libraries Australia and Public Libraries NSW – Country.

These are some of the issues I'd like to address during my term on the Board:

- I'd like to see us think as one industry and get rid of some of this silo mentality (hate the word silo but it's accurate)
- re-engage the profession in regional and rural Australia
- take advantage of a change in government
- ensure that we are educating the profession for the future
- develop strong partnerships with allied associations.

Libraries across Australia are being faced with a suite of issues. Political, social and technological changes offer us a myriad of challenges, but also opportunities. It is a time for us to work together as one industry to address these through policy direction, education and professional development for the benefit of our members and the communities we serve. If we are to achieve this and retain our relevance we need to speak with one voice, and to do this we need to work in concert with other library organisations.

I look forward to meeting with as many of you as possible over the next two years.

Jan Richards
jan.richards@alia.org.au

Letter to the editor

Every year my plastic ALIA card arrives. It sits in my wallet and is used two or three times to verify my membership number, then it goes into the rubbish bin and is carted off to create just another tiny bother to the earth, unlike my Friends of the Earth recycled-paper membership card, which quickly disintegrates in my compost heap.

I don't want any more plastic cards, thanks ALIA. I wonder how many other members feel the same way?

Pamela Lloyd
Victoria

* A reply will be published in September's *inCite*.



Note to Members

We welcome letters on any issue of relevance to the library and information sector. It is important to note that the opinions expressed in Letters to the Editor are those of the authors and not necessarily the official policy of the Australian Library and Information Association.

Deadline for letters is the 10th of the month and they should be no longer than 250 words. Please include your name and postal address as anonymous correspondence will not be reproduced.