



Take the library with you

Deakin University Library is constantly seeking innovative ways to support the university's commitment to rural and regional engagement and flexible learning. With the introduction of the Deakin at Your Doorstep program, the development of new learning spaces at our regional campuses, and a growing suite of online resources, the library is committed to making our services and resources increasingly accessible to clients in rural and regional areas.

Deakin at Your Doorstep

Deakin University Library supports the university's initiatives to improve access to higher education for students in rural and regional areas. The new Associate Degree of Arts, Business and Sciences — offered as part of the Deakin at Your Doorstep program — gives students new pathway options to learn at Institutes of TAFE located close to where they live, a concept that is well supported by the library's vision of connecting people with information and technology.

One level of the **Warrnambool Campus Library** is undergoing minor building refurbishments to support the Deakin at Your Doorstep program, due for completion in January 2010. When complete, the Warrnambool Campus Library will offer more desktop computers and study stations, enhanced learning environments that will provide greater flexibility, more audio-visual equipment to promote group study, and vibrant lounge areas for collaborative learning and socialising. The building works are a precursor to a major refurbishment project scheduled for 2011–2012.

Increasing accessibility with online technologies

Deakin University Library provides our clients with a new way to access the library catalogue: from their mobile phones. Optimised for the iPhone but accessible on all web-enabled mobile devices, the mobile catalogue's light-bandwidth search interface enables our clients to search for books and journal articles, access unit e-readings, e-books and other items from the library collection. These items can be accessed wherever mobile phone coverage is available, which means our clients can take the library with them by pointing their phone browser to m.library.deakin.edu.au.

To support flexible learning and increase the go-anywhere access of library resources and services, the library has just finished its latest series of usability tests on the library web site. The tests focused on the methods, pathways, and tools used when navigating the library web site, with a view to improving the overall user experience for on- and off-campus

students. Library staff leading the study, Michelle Watson and Kat Clancy, will outline the usability testing process—and how it will ultimately enhance staff and student engagement—at the VALA 2010 library technology conference in Melbourne, next February.

The library also continues to source and make available an increasing number of e-books – currently 98 500 – which provide greater flexibility and accessibility to students. Working in collaboration with lecturers who are trialling their textbook as an e-book, delivered on an e-book reader, the library is investigating book portability and go-anywhere access to course readings. The library has purchased several e-book readers and will offer a variety of books and articles for clients to access during the trial. The library anticipates a significant boom in the development and uptake of this technology, of particular benefit to students in rural and regional locations.

The Geelong Campus at Wauran Ponds building refurbishment

Deakin University Library has completed two building refurbishment projects: the first phase of development at the Melbourne Campus at Burwood and the new Alfred Deakin Prime Ministerial Library at the Geelong Waterfront Campus.

These projects are the appetiser to a major refurbishment project at the Geelong Campus at Wauran Ponds, which is set to transform the library's spaces into next-generation learning environments with a variety of flexible, contemporary learning spaces. Building work is well under way; the project is due for completion in 2010. When complete, the refurbishment project will deliver an innovative, exciting and engaging environment that will complement the Health and Medical Library Hub on the first floor of the library.

Partnerships with regional hospitals

Planning is under way to support Deakin University School of Medicine staff and students during two years of the four-year Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery course, undertaken in clinical school sites in rural and regional Victoria. To this end, Deakin has established good working relationships with several regional hospitals – Barwon Health, the Stan Carroll Library South West Health Care, Eastern Health, and the Ballarat Health Service – to provide seamless assistance for students and staff in this largely online academic working environment. The library will take an active role, liaising with the hospital librarians and supporting medical students with their print and information requirements. The students will have access to on-site local technological infrastructure and advice at each clinical site.

As these initiatives suggest, flexibility and choice are paramount in the library's commitment to increase accessibility for rural, regional, and off-campus clients. Whether it's in the airwaves, through a cable, or in person, the library seeks to build a range of high-quality services that are innovative, accessible, and customised for our clients' needs, meaning that they can always take the library with them.

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Geraldton-Greenough Regional Library

The City of Geraldton is located 400 kilometres north of Perth, at the centre of Australia's Coral Coast. The Geraldton-Greenough Regional Library offers its community a variety of services and events.

One of the key events in the library calendar is the annual Big Sky Readers and Writers Festival which is held over a weekend in September. This year, the fifth, the theme was loosely based around the International Year of Astronomy: *Big Sky – Write out there*.

The aim of the weekend is to provide opportunities for local emerging and established writers to further develop their skills by meeting published authors. It also allows readers a chance to meet authors and learn more about the writing and publishing process, as well as promoting the library (and Geraldton), as a cultural icon and community hub

Guest writers who could spare some extra time in their busy schedules were given the option of an overnight stay at the Abrolhos Islands. Those who went were captivated and inspired by the scenery and wildlife.

Writers this year included Liz Byrski, Dr Anita Heiss, Dean Alston, Robert Drewe, Shelley Gare, Barbara Temperton, Glyn Parry, Simon Haynes, Verity James, Jon Doust, Leonie Norrington, Joy Lefroy, Lara Morgan, Marlish Glorie, Peter Goldsworthy, musician Jim Fisher, and chef Kate Lamont.

Both authors and attendees seemed to thrive in the warm and friendly atmosphere that was created by keeping the festival small. Feedback was very positive, with many of our guests expressing their appreciation of the effort library staff had made to ensure they were looked after and made welcome.

The library has its own website which is maintained by the Librarian E-Services. The

REGIONAL AND RURAL LIBRARIES

virtual library offers customers a 24-hour library service which includes not only online databases but real time tutoring known as YourTutor and a downloadable audio book service, Overdrive.

Soon, the Heritage Services recently digitised oral histories will be added to the Overdrive Digital Library. The Geraldton-Greenough Library is the first public library in Western Australia to offer this service. The library also offers a free wi-fi service to its customers.

The Librarian Special Services has been running Better Beginnings, an early intervention family literacy programme since 2006. This program has provided every baby born in Geraldton-Greenough with a reading kit containing a quality board book.

Better Beginnings babies are invited to a presentation at the library and are also invited to a first birthday party and rhyme time sessions which encourage continued use of the library.

Heritage Services is a very busy area in the library. In addition to looking after the Local Studies Collection, Heritage Services also manages several special projects. These include: the Oral History program – with a focus on the digitisation of the existing Oral History Collection; a publishing program, the *Midwest Heritage Booklet series*, which to date has produced three titles in a series of eight; and the *Voiceprints of Geraldton* Project, a collaboration with the Perth International Arts Festival and Artistic Director Bill Bunbury, which was brought to a successful conclusion in February 2009.

Geraldton-Greenough Regional Library is one of eight Western Australian regional public libraries who have accepted an invitation from Libraries Australia to contribute records to their catalogue.

This year marked the twentieth anniversary of the Randolph Stow Young Writers Awards (RSYWA), which is run by the Geraldton

Mid West Regional Group of ALIA and supported by the library. The awards celebrate the life and work of Stow and his links with Geraldton, where he was born. Students from years four to twelve who reside in the Mid West Region are eligible to enter poetry and prose.

Friends of the Geraldton-Greenough Library (FOGGL) are always on hand to lend support and help promote the Library.

The library is also responsible for providing support, advice, and training to 27 libraries in the Mid West. The City Librarian visits these libraries on an annual basis. Distances covered are vast and involve many road trips. Regional visits open our eyes to the importance a library plays in the community, no matter how small. A regional meeting is held in Geraldton once a year, which provides a chance for library officers to exchange information, receive some training, and to meet our staff, as well as a representative from the State Library of Western Australia.

The library is now faced with a new challenge. Mid-2010 will see us relocating to the heart of the CBD into an old supermarket. Planning has been underway for the past year and renovations of the supermarket building are to commence in January. We look forward to providing the public with a new look and another service with the installation of RFID.

Life is never dull in our library world. I hope this article has provided readers with a taste of library life in Regional Western Australia.

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Celebrating 20 years: A voice for NSW public libraries

The Country Public Libraries Association (CPLA) was formed 20 years ago in Parkes, on 21 June 1989, as a result of the ongoing failure of the NSW State Government to provide adequate funding for public libraries. The association is now called Public Libraries NSW – Country (PLC).

History of the Association

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s public libraries in NSW had been suffering the effects of declining funding and support by the State Government. Library buildings were neglected and inadequate, collections were in a poor state with little hope of improvement, and staff were becoming demoralised.

In 1989, a new drive to improve the situation of public libraries began to emerge. It was led by prominent local government councillors such as Phil Potter and Bob Osborne, and general managers such as Colin Mills and Brian Andrews.

The idea of forming a Country Public Libraries Association began to take hold. Colin Mills, then the Parkes Council General Manager, organised a meeting of all country public libraries in June 1989, to coincide with a visit to Parkes by Mr Peter Collins, then NSW Minister for the Arts. Letters were sent to the General Managers and Mayors of all NSW councils urging them to come to this important meeting.

When Minister Collins arrived at Parkes he got quite a shock. He was expecting a small gathering of library representatives and was greeted by 200 plus councillors, mayors, general managers, and staff all fired up about the issue of funding for country public libraries.

It was to be a potent mix of people at all levels of local government that set the course for future participation in the CPLA, and one that would make the emerging organisation a force to be reckoned with. It is possibly the only organisation in local government where councillors and staff work so effectively together.

Library and Information Managers.

Applications are now open for the postgraduate programs in Library and Information Management or Business Information Management offered by UniSA.

These programs are blurring the boundaries and will enable librarians, records managers, archivists and business information management professionals to reinvent their careers, to keep in touch with the latest digital approaches and work in a wider skilled environment.

The programs offer you the opportunity to study at your own pace: either part-time or full-time, externally online, or face to face in Adelaide.

For further details and information please email moira.lawler@unisa.edu.au or visit unisa.edu.au/bim



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